WITHDRAWN

ELIE FAURE

HISTORY OF ART

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME ONE

Ancient Art *Mediaeval Art*
Renaissance Art

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY WALTER PACH

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HISTORY OF ART

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THE SPIRIT OF THE FORMS
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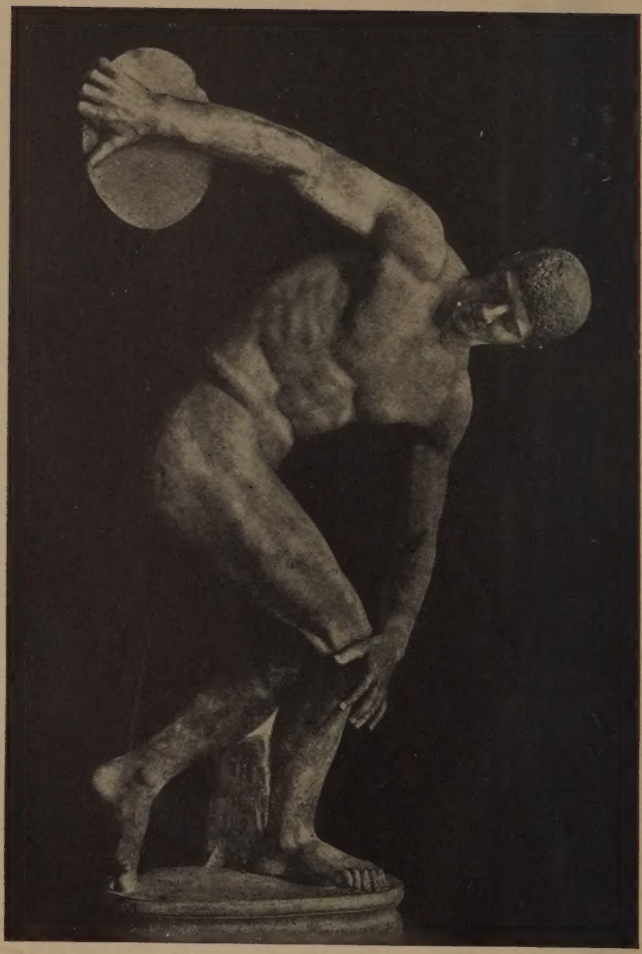
HISTORY OF ART

ANCIENT ART



MYRON. The discus thrower. Copy of the Greek.
(*National Museum, Rome*).

ELIE FAURE

HISTORY OF ART

ANCIENT ART

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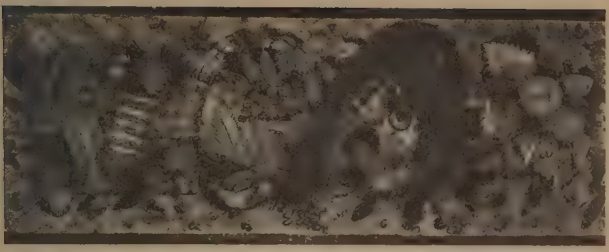
Faure, Elie, 1873-1937.
History of art

To My Wife



Pompeian mosaic (*Museum of Naples*).

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

ART history is, in its essentials, the history of man, for no one can write the story of art in more than a superficial way without following out the relation of each school to the ideas of its period and its people. But it is even more than that: it is the history of the development of man as revealed by his art. Elie Faure, in the present history, pursues this idea with a fidelity and an understanding that it has never received till now. Indeed, one may almost say that such a work as this could not have been written earlier, for it has been only gradually that we have come to understand the relation of art to the character and surroundings of the races it represents. Various works on isolated artists and schools have dealt with their subject from this standpoint, but there existed no survey of the world's art as a whole until the four volumes of this series were written.

The professional, whether critic, teacher, or artist, will find in these pages the fullest application of the modern theory of history (for the governing idea here is one that goes beyond the limits of art history), while the layman will follow the epic of man's development in company with a passionate lover of beauty who has the gift of communicating his enthusiasm. It is a fallacy to believe that a book for the general reader

should dilute the ideas of works addressed to specialists. The contrary is true: to meet the needs of persons of diverse interests, more intensity of idea is required, more breadth of scope, than is demanded of a treatise for specialists, whose concern with their subject will cause them to overlook dryness and diffuseness if a valuable theory is established or new facts are arrived at.

For a comparison of the older and the newer views of art history, the reader can scarcely be referred to anything clearer than M. Faure's own discussion in the preface to the new edition of this work (page xxxv). His brief reference there to the synoptic tables at the back of each volume may be supplemented by the assurances received from various close students of the special schools and epochs, who agree in vouching for the thoroughness with which this most objective compilation of names and dates has been made. A reference chart is thus constantly before the reader, serving him as a road map does a traveler. The text of most art histories does little more than amplify such tables. The characteristic which distinguishes Elie Faure's *History of Art* is that it shows the mass of facts functionally—as the living brain and heart of mankind.

The loyalty with which, in the preface mentioned, M. Faure defends the work of the archæologist is due in part to his appreciation of the material that the searchers for detail have placed at his disposal, but doubtless in part also to the fact that he himself knows the labor of obtaining the first-hand information on which the history and interpretation of art

are built. At no one place, however (and one need not fear to lay too much stress on this point), does he fall into the error of imagining that an assembling of facts is history. Even when writing of arts like the Egyptian and the Greek, as to which his study on the historic sites has given him a special authority, even when treating of the Gothic period, as to which his knowledge is so profound as to make Mr. Havelock Ellis apply the word "unsurpassable" to the chapters of this history on Gothic art—his modern understanding of his task causes him to refer constantly to the philosophy, social life, and ideals of the people under examination, and not to their art alone. He goes farther, and by a series of dramatic confrontations makes us realize the differences among the arts and their debt to one another. Thus, in the pages on the Gothic he has before his eyes the color of Mohammedan art which was of such importance to western Europe when its returning crusaders brought back to the glassmakers of the cathedrals their memories of the Orient. Yet M. Faure's main guide in this part of his study is the life of the mediæval commune; he shows its relation to the appearance or nonappearance of great cathedrals in the French cities and its use as a basis for an explanation of the difference between English and French Gothic. We are thus relieved in very large measure from the tyranny of taste and of arbitrary assertion that plays so large a part in most art writing.

In the present volume, again, the rise and decline of Greek art are not treated as matters that have

been permanently decided by experts; neither does the author justify his statements in terms of æsthetics to be followed only by those persons who have had a special experience in the arts. The sources of Greek art are studied with a view of allowing anyone interested in the subject to see the reason for the "focus" that would be produced when the elements of the light were fused, the golden period is considered with relation to the ideas of philosophy and liberty which had so great an effect on the arts, and as Greece turns to the Dusk of Mankind (with which variant of Wagner's word "Götterdämmerung" M. Faure entitles his chapter on the decline), we are again shown, in the ideas at work in the race, the reasons for the new phases of its art — and not simply told that one statue is later or worse than another, or involved in technical intricacies from which we only escape with the classic "*de gustibus.*"

A feature of the history, which, the English reader will recognize with the four volumes before him, is the scope of the work. It is one of the proofs of its right to represent the modern idea of art. Beginning with the accessions to our knowledge a century ago, when important Greek works came to northern Europe, we have for a hundred years been extending the boundaries of the art considered classic. The masterpieces of Japan, China, and India have been reaching us only since the middle of the nineteenth century. The last of the exotic arts to affect Europeans has been that of the African sculptors. No other history approaches that of M. Faure in its full and clear

study of the contribution of these more lately recognized arts to the widening of our horizon and to the changes in our understanding which they have caused.

It is not alone that the art of the last half century is different from that of earlier times because it is built on a wider base, but that to-day we see the whole of the past with new eyes. As our thought evolves there will unquestionably be further changes in our estimate of the past, but the summary resulting from the present work may confidently be expected to hold its rank as an important one in the history of the subject. For we have here the ideas of a period of intense research and criticism, and a point in that period when our thought has attained at least a temporary tranquillity through its grasp of the new elements at its command and through an outlook on art that represents the creative men of the epoch.

It is to be doubted whether later critics will differ, to a radical degree, from the judgment of the Renaissance to which M. Faure points in his volume on that period, for the great critical activity of the last half century has been specially occupied with the Renaissance, and M. Faure knows well the results of this study. Perhaps it will be around the volume on *Modern Art* that later discussion will mainly center, for here the currents of interpretation sometimes issue from conflicting sources. M. Faure's analysis, however, must have a permanent interest, for it is based on too deep an understanding of the political and social structure of the European countries ever to be entirely superseded. It is the philosophy of a

man whose role in the drama of his time is enriched by the great breadth of his activities and who has drawn on them all in his writing on art—the central interest of his career.

Elie Faure is a physician, and the scientist's knowledge and point of view is to be traced in his *History of Art* as well as in his masterly essay on Lamarck. He is one of the founders of the Université Populaire and one of its lecturers. The thought on social questions which informs those books by M. Faure that treat of economic and racial evolution, of ethics and of war, recurs when he writes of art, or rather he looks on all of these things as inextricably mingled.

As we reach his pages on the later nineteenth century and the twentieth (for the last volume carries us to the art produced since the war), we find the author giving not only the original judgments that characterize his history from its beginning, but transmitting to us the ideas of the artists themselves, for as a result of his personal acquaintance with many of the chief workers of his time, he is enabled to speak not only of them but for them.

And yet the tone of these pages is but little different from that of the remainder of the work; the arts of the past have been so alive for the writer that his words seem to come most often from one who had seen the work produced. While searching untiringly for the facts of history and presenting their essentials in the order and relationship that the most modern scholarship has made available, the idea behind the

whole work must (as M. Faure himself explains in the preface to the new edition before cited) be tinged with the personality of the writer and by the character of his time. "The historian who calls himself a scientist simply utters a piece of folly." In these matters judgment is inevitable, for to write the history of art one must make one's decisions as to what it is. The writing of it is in itself a work of art —as the style of Elie Faure is there to prove. Only one who feels the emotions of art can tell others which are the great works and make clear the collective poem formed by their history. It is precisely because Elie Faure is adding something to that poem that he has the right to tell us of its meaning.

WALTER PACH.

INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST FRENCH EDITION

ART, which expresses life, is as mysterious as life. It escapes all formulas, as life does. But the need of defining it pursues us, because it enters every hour of our existence, aggrandizing the aspects of that existence by its more elevated forms or dishonoring them by its lower forms. No matter how distasteful it is for us to make the effort to hear and to observe, it is impossible for us not to hear and to see, it is impossible for us to refrain wholly from forming some kind of opinion of the world of appearances —the meaning of which it is precisely the mission of art to reveal to us. Historians, moralists, biologists, and metaphysicians—all those who demand of life the secret of its origins and its purposes—are sooner or later compelled to ask why we recognize ourselves

in the works which manifest life. But the too restricted limits of biology, of metaphysics, of morality, and of history compel us to narrow the field of our vision when we enter the moving immensity of the poem that man sings, forgets, and has begun again to sing and to forget ever since he has been man. It matters not which of these studies has interested us, the feeling for beauty will be found to be identical in all of them. And without doubt it is this feeling that dominates them and draws them on to that possible unity which is the goal of human activity and which alone makes that activity real.

It is only by listening to the heart that one can speak of art without belittling it. We are all, in some measure, partakers of the truth, but we cannot know truth itself, unless we desire passionately to seek it out and, having found it, feel the enthusiasm to proclaim it widely. Only he who permits the divine voices to sing within him knows how to respect the mystery of the work which inspired him to induce other men to share in his emotion. Michelet did not betray the Gothic workmen or Michael Angelo, because he himself was consumed by the passion which uplifts the nave of the cathedrals and that other passion which unchains its storm in the vaults of the Sistine. Baudelaire was a great poet because he penetrated to the central hearth from which the spirit of the heroes radiates in force and in light. Moreover, if the ideas of Taine did not die with him, it is because his artist's nature is greater than his will and because his dogmatic stiffness is continually over-

flowed by the incessantly renewed wave of sensations and of images.

Taine came at the hour when we learned that our own destiny was bound up with the acts of those who have preceded us on life's road and even with the very structure of the earth from which we spring. He was, therefore, in a position to see the form of our thought issue from the mold of history. "Art sums up life." It enters us with the strength of our soil, the color of our sky, through the atavistic preparation which determines it, as well as through the passions and the will of men—which it defines. For the expression of our ideas, we employ the materials which our eyes can see and our hands touch. It is impossible that Phidias, the sculptor who lived in the South, in a clearly defined world, and Rembrandt, the painter who lived in the mist of the North, amid a floating world—two men separated by twenty centuries during which humanity lived, suffered, and aged—should use the same words. Only, it is necessary that we should recognize ourselves in Rembrandt as well as in Phidias.

Not until we have expressed in some sort of language the appearance of the things about us do these things exist for us and retain their appearance. If art were nothing more than a reflection of societies, which pass like shadows of clouds upon the earth, we should ask no more of art than that it teach us history. But it recounts man to us, and, through him, the universe. It goes beyond the moment, it lengthens the duration of time, it widens the comprehension of man, and ex-

tends the life and limit of the universe. It fixes moving eternity in its momentary form.

In recounting man to us, art teaches us to know and understand ourselves. The strange thing is that there should be any need for art to do this. Tolstoi's book [1] meant nothing else. He came at a painful moment when, strongly fortified by the results of our research work, but bewildered by the horizons which it opened, we perceived that our effort was becoming diffused, and sought to compare the results attained in order to unite in a common faith and march forward. We think and believe what we need to think and to believe, and it is this which gives to our thoughts and beliefs, throughout our history, that indestructible foundation of humanity which they all have. Tolstoi said what it was necessary to say at the moment when he said it.

Art is the appeal to the instinct of communion in men. We recognize one another by the echoes it awakens in us, which we transmit to others by our enthusiasm, and which resound in the deeds of men throughout all generations, even when those generations may not suspect it. If, during the hours of depression and lack of comprehension only a few of us hear the call, it is that in those hours we alone possess the idealistic energy which later is to reanimate the heroism asleep in the multitudes. It has been said that the artist is sufficient unto himself. That is not true. The artist who says so is infected with an evil pride. The artist who believes it is not an

[1] Tolstoi, *What is Art?*

artist. If he had not needed the most universal of our languages, the artist would not have created it. He would dig the ground to get his bread on a desert island. No one has more need of the presence and approbation of men. He speaks because he feels their presence around him, and lives in the hope—sometimes despaired of but never relinquished—that they will come at last to understand him. It is his function to pour out his being, to give as much as he can of his life, to demand of others that they also give him as much as they can of themselves, to realize with them—in an obscure and magnificent collaboration—a harmony all the more impressive that a greater number of lives have participated in it. The artist, to whom men give everything, returns in full measure what he has taken from them.

Nothing touches us except what happens to us or what can happen to us. The artist is ourselves. He has behind him the same depths of humanity, whether enthusiastic or depressed; he has about him the same secret nature, which each of his steps broadens. The artist is the crowd, to which we all belong, which defines us all, with our consent or despite our resistance. He has not the power to gather up the stones of the house which he builds us (at the risk of crushing in his breast and of tearing his hands), on any road save that on which we travel at his side. He must suffer from that which makes our suffering, and we must make him suffer. He must feel our joys and he must derive them from us. It is necessary that he live our griefs and our inner victories, even when we do not feel them.

The artist can feel and dominate his surroundings only when he considers them as a means of creation. Only then does he give us those permanent realities which all acts and all moments reveal to those who know how to see and how to live. These realities survive the changes in human society as the mass of the sea survives the agitations of its surface. Art is always a "system of relations," and a synthetic system. This is true even of primitive art, which shows the passionate pursuit of an essential sentiment, despite its indefatigable accumulation of detail. Every image symbolizes in brief the idea which the artist creates for himself of the unlimited world of sensations and forms. Every image is an expression of his desire to bring about in this world the reign of that order which he knows how to discover in it. Art has been, since its most humble origins, the realization of the presentiments of certain men—who answer the needs of all men. Art has forced the world to yield to it the laws which have permitted us to establish progressively the sovereignty of our mind over the world. Emanating from humanity, art has revealed to humanity its own intelligence. Art has defined the races; alone it bears the testimony of their dramatic effort. If we want to know what we are, we must understand what art is.

Art initiates us into certain profound realities whose actual possession would enable humanity to bring about, within and around, itself the supreme harmony which is the fugitive goal of its endeavor; we do not desire such possession, however, as its effect would

be to kill movement and thereby kill hope. Art is surely something infinitely greater than it is imagined to be by those who do not understand it. Perhaps also it is more practical than is thought by many of those who feel the force of its action. Born of the association of our sensibility and our experience, formed in order that we may be the masters of ourselves, it has, at all events, nothing of that disinterested aloofness to which Kant, Spencer, and Guyau himself attempted to limit its sphere. All the images in the world are useful instruments for us, and the work of art attracts us only because we recognize in it the formulation of our desire.

We admit freely that objects of primary utility—our clothing, our furniture, our vehicles, our roads, our houses—seem to us beautiful when they serve their purpose adequately. But we stoutly persist in placing above—that is, outside of Nature, the superior organisms in which she proclaims herself—our bodies, our faces, our thoughts, the infinite world of ideas, of passions, and of the landscapes in which these organisms live, and by which they are mutually defined so that we are unable to separate them. Guyau did not go far enough when he asked himself if the most useful gesture were not the most beautiful, and with him we recoil from the decisive word as if it would stifle our dream. Yet we know our dream to be imperishable, since we shall never attain that realization of ourselves which we pursue unceasingly. Let me quote a sentence uttered by him among all men whose intelligence was freest, perhaps, from any material

limitation: "Is it not the function of a beautiful body," said Plato, "is it not its utility which demonstrates to us that it is beautiful? And everything which we find beautiful — faces, colors, sounds, professions — are not all these beautiful in the measure that we find them useful?"

Let our idealism be reassured! It is only by a long accumulation of emotion and of will that man reaches the point on life's road where he can recognize the forms which are useful to him. It is this choice alone, made by certain minds, which will determine for the future, in the instincts of multitudes, what is destined to pass from the domain of speculation into the domain of practice. It is our general development, it is the painful but constant purification of our intelligence and of our desire, which create and render necessary certain forms of civilization — which positive minds translate into the direct and easy satisfaction of all their material needs. What is most useful to man is the idea.

The beautiful form, whether it be a tree or a river, the breasts of a woman or her sides, the shoulders or arms of a man, or the cranium of a god — the beautiful form is the form that adapts itself to its function. The idea has no other role than that of defining the form for us. The idea is the lofty outlook and the infinite extension in the world and in the future of the most imperious of our instincts. It sums up and proclaims this instinct as the flower and the fruit sum up the plant, prolong it and perpetuate it. Every being, even the lowest, contains within himself, at

least once in his earthly adventure -when he loves - all the poetry of the world. And he whom we call the artist is the one among living beings who, in the presence of universal life, maintains the state of love in his heart.

The obscure and formidable voice which reveals to man and to woman the beauty of woman and man, and impels them to make a decisive choice so that they may perpetuate and perfect their species, never ceases to resound in the artist, strengthened and multiplied by all the voices and the murmurs and the sounds and the tremblings which accompany it. That voice—he is forever hearing it, every time that the grasses move, every time that a violent or graceful form proclaims its life along his pathway. He hears it as he follows, from the roots to the leaves, the rise of the sap from under the earth to the trunks and the branches of the trees, every time that he looks at the sea rising and falling as if to respond to the tide of billions of life-cells that roll in it, every time that the fructifying force of heat and rain overwhelms him, every time that the generating winds repeat to him that human hymns are made up of the calls to voluptuousness and hope with which the world is filled. He seeks out the forms which he foresees, as a man or an animal in the grip of love seeks them. His desire passes from one form to another, he compares them pitilessly, and from his comparisons there springs forth, one day, the superior form, the idea whose recollection will weigh on his heart so long as he has not imparted his own life to it. He suffers until

death, because each time that he has made a form fruitful, brought an idea to light, the image of another is born in him, and because his hope, never wearied of reaching out for what he desires, can only be born of the despair at not having attained his desire. He suffers; his tyrannical disquietude often makes those around him suffer. But around him, and fifty centuries after him, he consoles millions of men. The work he will leave behind him will assure an increase of power to those who can understand the logic and the certitude of his images. In listening to him, men will enjoy the illusion which he enjoyed for a moment—the illusion, often formidable but always ennobling, of absolute adaptation.

It is the only divine illusion! We give the name of a god to the form which best interprets our desire—sensual, moral, individual, social, no matter what,—our vague desire to comprehend, to utilize life, ceaselessly to extend the limits of the intelligence and the heart. With this desire we invade the lines, the projections, and the volumes which proclaim this form to us, and it is in the meeting with the powerful forces that circulate within the form that the god reveals himself to us. From the impact of the spirit that animates the form with the spirit that animates us, life springs forth. We shall never be able to utilize it unless it responds wholly to those obscure movements which dictate our own actions. Rodin sees quivering in the block of marble a man and a woman knotted together by their arms and their legs, but we shall never understand the tragic necessity for

such an embrace if we do not feel that an inner force, desire, mingles the hearts and the flesh of the bodies thus welded together. When Carrière wrests from the matter of the universe a mother giving the breast to her child, we shall not understand the value of that union if we do not feel that an inner force, love, dictates the bending of the torso and the curve of the mother's arm, and that another inner force, hunger, buries the infant in her bosom. The image that expresses nothing is not beautiful, and the finest sentiment escapes us if it does not directly determine the image which shall translate it. The pediments, frescoes, and epics, the symphonies, the loftiest architectures, all the sweep of liberty, the glory and the irresistible power of the infinite and living temple which we erect to ourselves, are in this mysterious accord.

In every case, it is this agreement which defines all the higher forms of the testimonies to confidence and faith which we have left on our long road. It defines all our idealistic effort, which no finalism—in the "radical" [1] sense which the philosophers are giving to the world—has directed. Our idealism is no other thing than the reality of our mind. The necessity of adaptation creates it and maintains it in us, that it may be increased and transmitted to our children. It exists as a possibility at the foundation of our original moral life, as the physical man is contained in the distant protozoan. Our research for the absolute is the indefatigable desire for the repose that

[1] H. Bergson. *Creative Evolution.*

would result from our decisive triumph over the group of blind forces which oppose our progress. But, for our salvation, the farther we go, the more distant the goal becomes. The goal of life is living, and it is to ever-moving and ever-renewing life that our ideal leads us.

When we follow the march of time and pass from one people to another, the forms of that ideal seem to change. But what changes, basically, is the needs of a given time or the needs of given peoples whose future alone can show, across the variations of appearances, the identity of their nature and the character of their usefulness to us. Scarcely have we left the Egypto-Hellenic world before we see, stretching before us like a plain, the kingdom of the mind. The temples of the Hindoos and the cathedrals break into its frontiers, the cripples of Spain and the poor of Holland invade it without introducing even one of those types of general humanity through which the first artists had defined our needs. What does it matter? The great dream of humanity can recognize, there again, the effort toward adaptation which has always guided it. Other conditions of life have appeared, different forms of art have made us feel the necessity for understanding them in order to direct us in the path of our best interests. Real landscape, the life of the people, and the life of the middle class, arrive and powerfully characterize the aspects of every day, into which our soul, exhausted with its dream, may retire and refresh itself. The appeal of misery and despair, even, is made, that we may get back to ourselves, know ourselves, and strengthen ourselves.

If we turn to the Egyptians, to the Assyrians, the Greeks, the Hindoos, the French of the Middle Ages, the Italians, and the Dutch, one after the other, it is that we belong now to one group of surroundings, now to one epoch, now to one minute, even of our time or of our life, which has need of a given people more than of another one. When we are cold we seek the sun; we seek the shadow when we are warm. The great civilizations which have formed us are each entitled to an equal share of our gratitude, because we have successively asked of each the things we lacked. We have lived tradition when it was to our interest to live it, and have accepted revolution when it saved us. We have been idealists when the world was abandoning itself to discouragement or was foreseeing new destinies, realists when it seemed to have found its provisional stability. We have not asked for more reserve from passionate races or more ardor from positive races, because we have understood the necessity of passion and the necessity of the positive spirit. It is we who wrote the immense book wherein Cervantes has recounted our generous enthusiasm and our practical common sense. We have followed one or the other of the great currents of the mind, and we have been able to invoke arguments of almost equal value to justify our inclinations. What we call idealistic art, what we call realistic art, are momentary forms of our eternal action. It is for us to seize the immortal moment when the forces of conservation and the forces of revolution in life marry, for the realization of the equilibrium of the human soul.

Thus, whatever the form in which a thing is offered to us, whether true now or true in our desire, or true both in its immediate appearance and in its possible destinies, the object by itself and the fact by itself are nothing. They count only through their infinitely numerous relationships with infinitely complex surroundings. And it is these relationships, never twice the same, which translate universal feelings of an infinite simplicity. Each fragment of the work, because it is adapted to its end, however humble that end may be, must extend itself in silent echoes throughout the whole of the depth and breadth of the work. Its sentimental tendencies are, in reality, secondary: "Beautiful painting," said Michael Angelo, "is religious in itself, for the soul is elevated by the effort it has to make to attain perfection and to mingle with God; beautiful painting is a reflection of that divine perfection, a shadow from the brush of God . . . !"

Idealistic or realistic, a thing of the present day or of general conditions, let the work live, and in order to live, let it be *one*, first of all! The work which has not this oneness dies, like the ill-formed creatures which the species, evolving toward higher destinies, must eliminate little by little. The work which is one, on the contrary, lives in the least of its fragments. The breast of an ancient statue, a foot, an arm, even when half devoured by subterranean moisture, quivers and seems warm to the touch of the hand, as if vital forces were still modeling it from within. The unearthed fragment is alive. It bleeds like a wound. Over the gulf of the centuries, the

mind finds its relations with the pulverized debris, it animates the organism as a whole with an existence which is imaginary, but present to our emotion. It is the magnificent testimony to the human importance of art, engraving the effort of our intelligence on the seats of the earth, as the bones we find there trace the rise of our material organs.

To realize unity in the mind and to transmit it to the work is to obey that need of general and durable order which our universe imposes on us. The scientist expresses this order by the law of continuity, the artist by the law of harmony, the just man by the law of solidarity. These three essential instruments of our human adaptation—science, which defines the relations of fact with fact; art, which suggests the relations of the fact with man; and morality which seeks the relations of man with man—establish for our use, from one end of the material and spiritual world to the other, a system of relations whose permanence and utility demonstrate its logic to us. They teach us what serves us, what harms us. Nothing else matters very greatly. There is neither error nor truth, neither ugliness nor beauty, neither evil nor good outside of the use in human problems which we give to our three instruments. The mission of our sensibility, of our personal intelligence, is to establish the value of them, through searching out, from one to the other, the mysterious passages which will permit us to grasp the continuity of our effort, in order to comprehend and accept it as a whole. By so doing we shall, little by little, utilize what we call error, ugliness, and evil,

as means to a higher education and realize harmony in ourselves, that we may extend it about us.

Harmony is a profound law, which goes back to primitive unity, and the desire for it is imposed on us by the most general and the most imperious of all the realities. The forms we see live only through the transitions which unite them. And by these transitions the human mind can return to the common source of the forms, just as it can follow the nourishing current of the sap starting from the flowers and the leaves to go back to the roots. Consider a landscape stretching back to the circle of the horizon. A plain covered with grasses, with clump of trees, a river flowing to the sea, roads bordered with houses, villages, wandering beasts, men, a sky full of light or of clouds. The men feed on the fruit of the trees and on the meat and milk of the beasts, which yield their fur and their skins for clothing. The beasts live on grasses and leaves, and if the grasses and the leaves grow it is because the sky takes from the sea and the rivers the water which it spreads upon them. Neither birth nor death—life, permanent and confused. All aspects of matter interpenetrate one another, general energy is in flux and reflux, it flowers at every moment, to wither and to reflower in endless metamorphoses; the symphony of the colors and the symphony of the murmurs are but little else than the perfume of the inner symphony which issues from the circulation of forces in the continuity of forms.

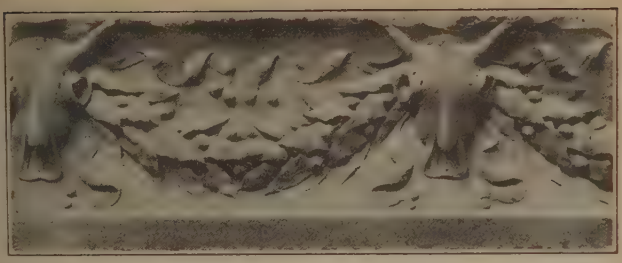
The artist comes, seizes the universal law, and renders us a world complete, whose elements, characterized by

their principal relations, all participate in the harmonious accomplishment of the ensemble of its functions.

Spencer saw the bare heavenly bodies escaping from the nebulæ, solidifying, little by little, the water condensing on their surface, elementary life arising from the water, diversifying its appearances, every day lifting higher its branches, its twigs, its fruits, and, as a spherical flower opens to give its dust to space, the heart of the world expanding in its multiplied forms. But it seems that an obscure desire to return to its origins governs the universe. The planets, issue of the sun, cannot tear themselves from its encircling force, though they seem to want to plunge back into it. Atom solicits atom, and all living organisms, coming from the same cell, seek living organisms to make that cell again through burying themselves in each other. . . . Thus the just man contents himself with living, thus the scientist and the artist delve into the world of forms and feelings and cause their consciousness to retrace its steps along the road which that world traveled, to pass from its ancient homogeneity to its present diversity. And thus, in a heroic effort, they re-recreate primitive unity.

Let the artist, therefore, be proud of his life of illumination and of pain. Of these heralds of hope he plays the greatest role. In every case he can attain this role. Scientific activity, social activity bear within themselves a signification sufficiently defined for them to be self-sufficient. Art touches science through the world of forms, which is the element of its work, it enters the social plane by addressing

itself to our faculty of love. There are great savants who cannot arouse emotion in us, men of great honesty who cannot reason. There is no hero of art who is not at the same time (through the sharp and long conquest of his means of expression) a hero of knowledge and a human hero of the heart. When he feels living within him the earth and space and all that moves and all that lives, even all that seems dead — to the very tissue of the stones — how could it be that he should not feel the life of the emotions, the passions, the sufferings of those who are made as he is? Whether he knows it or not, whether he wants it or not, his art is of a piece with the work of the artists of yesterday and the artists of to-morrow; it reveals to the men of to-day the solidarity of their effort. All action in time, all action in space have their goal in his action. It is his place to affirm the agreement of the thought of Jesus, of the thought of Newton, and of the thought of Lamarck. And it is on that account that Phidias and Rembrandt must recognize each other and that we must recognize ourselves in them.



PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION

I HAVE been on the point of suppressing the pages which serve as an *Introduction* to the first edition of this book. I judged them—I still judge them—boyish and tearful in their philosophy, and obscure and badly written as well. I have given up my intention. After all, those pages represent a moment of myself. And since I have attempted to express that moment, it no longer belongs to me.

Perhaps one ought to write works composed of several volumes in a few months, their documentation once finished and the ideas they represent having been thoroughly set in order. The unity of the work would gain thereby. But the ensemble of the worker's effort would doubtless lose. Every time he thinks he has been mistaken, a living desire awakens in him, which pushes him on to new creations. In reality, each writer writes only one book, each painter paints only one picture. Every new work is destined, in the mind of its author, to correct the preceding one, to complete the thought—which will not be completed. He does this work over and over again,

wherever his sensation or thought was rendered imperfectly in the preceding work. When man interrogates and exerts himself, he does not really change. He only rids his nature of what is foreign to it, and deepens that portion that is his own. Those who burn their work before it is known, because it no longer satisfies them, are credited with great courage. I ask myself whether there is not still greater courage in admitting that one has not always been what one has become, in becoming what one is not yet, and in permitting to remain alive the material and irrefutable witnesses of the variations of one's mind.

I have, therefore, no more suppressed the *Introduction* of this volume than the chapters which follow it, where, however, ideas will also be found that I have great difficulty in recognizing to-day.[1] I cannot change the face that was mine ten years ago. And even if I could, should I exchange it for the one that is mine at the present day? I should lose, doubtless, for it is less young now. And who knows if one does not hate—just because one is older—the signs of youth in one's mind, as one disdains—because one regrets them—the remembrances of youth in one's body? In any case, hateful or not, one cannot modify the features of a face without at the same time destroying the harmony of the old face, and thereby compromising the features of the future face. For the greater part of the ideas which we think constitute

[1] The variants that I have introduced into this new edition—additions or subtractions—neither add to nor subtract anything from the general meaning of the work. They bear almost exclusively on the form.

our present truth have as their origin precisely those which we believe constitute our past error. When we consider one of our early works, the passages which strike us the most are those which we love least. Soon we see no more than these; they fascinate us; they mask the entire work. On closing the book again they still pursue us; we ask ourselves why, and the result is—however little our courage—that we open roads for ourselves which we had not suspected. Thus it is that the critical spirit, made sharp and subtle by the disappointments and sufferings of one's intellectual development, becomes, little by little, the most precious, and doubtless the most active, auxiliary of the creative spirit itself.

I am a "self-taught" man. I confess it without shame and without pride. This first volume, which weighs on me, has served at least to inform me that if I was not yet, at the moment when I wrote it, out of the social herd, I was already repelled from entering the philosophic herd. The fact is that preconceived notions of æsthetics were so far from presiding over my education in art that it is my emotions as an artist which have led me, progressively, to a philosophy of art which becomes less and less dogmatic. In many of these old pages there will be found traces of a finalism which, I hope, has almost disappeared from my mind. The reason is that I have evolved with the forms of art themselves, and that, instead of imposing on the idols I adored *a* religion, I have asked these idols to teach me *religion*. All, in fact, revealed the same one to me, as well as the fact that

it was quite impossible to fix it precisely, because it is universal.

I have had to make an effort in order to reach a harmonious conception of the plastic poem in which men commune. Even now it remains an undemonstrable, an intuitive, even a mystical conception, if you like to call it that. Yet, in consideration of the effort expended, I hope that I may be pardoned the didactic solemnity of the beginning of my book. It is the mark of the thirtieth year, among those, at least, who have not the privilege of being free men at twenty and slaves at forty. When analysis begins to corrode one's early illusions, one draws oneself together, one wants to keep them intact, one defends oneself against the new illusions which are outlining themselves; one insists on remaining faithful to ideas and images, to means of expression that are no longer a part of one. One surrounds oneself with a hard mold which hampers one's movements. Is not that, in all æsthetic and moral evolutions of the past and the present, exactly the passage from the first instinctive ingenuousness to the free discovery of a second ingenuousness, exactly such a passage as we see in the stiffness of all archaisms? If I am not mistaken in this, I should be very well pleased if the tense character of the beginning of my book corresponded even a little to the tenseness of the first and most innocent among the builders of temples, the painters of tombs, and the sculptors of gods.

I have been reproached with having written not a "History of Art," but rather a sort of poem concern-

ing the history of art. This reproach has left me wondering. I have asked myself what, outside of pure and simple chronology, the recital of inner events could be, when the material expression of those events consists entirely of affective elements. In the sense in which the historians understand history, synoptic tables suffice, and I have prepared them. There is no history except that summed up by these tables which is not, fatally, submitted to the interpretation of the historian.[1] What is true of the history of man's actions is infinitely more so of the history of his ideas, his sensations, and his desires. I cannot conceive a history of art otherwise than made up of a poetic transposition, not as exact, but as living as possible, of the plastic poem conceived by humanity. I have attempted that transposition. It is not my place to say whether I have succeeded with it.

To state the question a little differently, it seems to me that history should be understood as a symphony. The description of the gestures of men has no interest for us, no use, no sense even, if we do not try to seize on the profound relationships of these gestures, to show how they link together in a chain. We must try, especially, to restore their dynamic character, that unbroken germination of nascent forces engendered by the ceaseless play of the forces of the past on the forces of the present. Every man, every act, every work is a musician or an instrument in an orchestra. One cannot regard, it seems to me, the cymbal player or the triangle player as of the same importance as the

[1] Or rather, what history is there that the historian does not interpret?

violoncellos or of the mass of violins. The historian is the leader of the orchestra in that symphony which the multitudes compose with the collaboration of the artists, the philosophers, and the men of action. The historian's role is that of making clear the essential characters, to indicate their great lines, to make their volumes stand out, to contrast their lights with their shadows, to shade off the passages and harmonize the tones. It is so for the art-historian far more than for the historian of action—because the importance of action registers itself automatically in its results and traces, whereas the importance of a work of art is an affair of appreciation.

The historian should be partial. The historian who calls himself a scientist simply utters a piece of folly. I do not know, nor he either, any measuring instrument which shall permit him to graduate the respective importance of Leochares and Phidias, of Bernini and Michael Angelo. It seems that this is admitted with regard to literary history, and that no one thinks of getting wrought up if the historian of letters forgets Paul de Kock, voluntarily or not, to dilate upon Balzac. Neither is anyone surprised if the professor at the Sorbonne, writing a history of France, gives more importance to the gestures of Napoleon than to those of Clarke or Maret. The purists protest only when the partiality of sentiment intervenes to judge Napoleon, Clarke, or Maret. They do not realize that the mere statement of facts already supposes a choice made by men as a whole or by the events themselves, before the historian begins to intervene.

When the question is one of contemporary history, the part of the orchestra leader is much more arduous to perform. The view of the facts as seen from a distance, the more or less strong or persistent influence of the events on minds, the memory that they have left, all these impose on him who writes a commentary of the past, certain summits, certain depressions, visible to all. And to recreate a living organism from them he need do no more than join them with a curve. From nearer by, intuition alone decides, and the courage to make use of it. So much the worse for him who does not dare and cannot leave to the future the task of saying whether he has done well or ill in dealing with the works and the men of his time, as an artist does with the light and shade which he distributes on the object. It is possible that, from the orthodox point of view of history, it is a heresy to affirm that the slightest study by Renoir, the slightest water color by Cézanne belongs much more effectively to the history of art than the hundred thousand canvases exhibited in ten years in all the *salons* of painting. And, notwithstanding, one must risk that heresy. The poet of the present makes the history of the future.

Let us go farther. The gesture of a hungry man who stretches out his hand, the words that a woman murmurs in the ear of the passer-by on some enervating evening, and the most infinitesimal human gesture have a much more important place in the history of art itself than the hundred thousand canvases in question, and the associations of interest which try

to impose them on the public. The orchestral multitude brings into prominence the playing of artists like Cézanne and Renoir, and it is they, in turn, who make clear to us the value of the multitude, which is composed, only to an insignificant degree, of the mass of mediocre works. Amid them its voice arises like a cry in a silence full of indiscreet mimicry and excessive gesture. Our orchestra takes its elements from the widely scattered manners and customs, from the whole of their action on the evolution and exchange of ideas; it is in the discoveries, the needs, the social conflicts of the moment, the obscure and formidable upheavals that love and hunger provoke in the depths of collective life and the hidden springs of the individual conscience.

I am quite willing to mention even the movement called "artistic," which floats on the surface of history by means of institutes, schools, and official doctrines, like a rouge badly applied to a woman's face. It plays its little part in the great plastic symphony wherein Renoir and Cézanne in our time, for example, like Rubens and Rembrandt in another, play the most illustrious role. But it is only by indirect means that the spirit created in the crowds by this "artistic" movement, reacts on each new affirmation of a great artist—who is unaware of practically all its manifestations. I think that if the risk is greater for the modern historian who gives prominence to Cézanne and Renoir in his narrative, his attempt is as legitimate, from the "scientific" point of view as—for the historian of the past—the custom of quite candidly giving more importance to Phidias than to Leochares.

The fact is that we have been for more than a century — since Winckelmann approximately — far too much inclined to tolerate a growing confusion between art history and archæology. One might as well confuse literature and grammar. It is one thing to describe, by their external character, the monuments that man has left on his journey, to measure them, to define their functions and style, to locate them in place and time—it is another thing to try to tell by what secret roots these monuments plunge to the heart of races, how they sum up the most essential desires of the races, how they form the recognizable testimony to the sufferings, the needs, the illusions, and the mirages which have hollowed out in the flesh of all men, living and dead, the bloody passage from sensation to mind. It is thus that in wanting to write a history that should not be a dry catalogue of the plastic works of man, but a passionate narrative of the meeting of his curiosity and education with the forms that lie in his path, I may have committed —I have committed—errors of archæology. Although I know worse errors, and although I have not failed to commit some of these besides, I will not go so far as to say that I do not regret them.

Archæology has been profoundly useful. By seeking and finding original sources, by establishing family likenesses, filiations, and the relationships of works and of schools, little by little, in the face of the diversity in the form of the images (from which so many warring schools of æsthetics have been inspired to create silly exclusivisms), archæology has defined the

original analogy of these works and schools and the almost constant parallelism of their evolution. Everywhere, behind the artist, it has aided us to rediscover the man. Those among us, who have to-day become capable of entering into immediate communion with the most unexpected forms of art, evidently do not take note that such communion is the fruit of a long, previous education, for which archæology is doubtless the best preparation, however convinced of the fact it is itself. Those who rise up with the greatest contempt against the insensibility of the archæologist are probably those who owe him the greater part, if not of their sensibility, at least of the means which have permitted them to refine it. To-day we laugh at the worthy persons who grant scarcely a pitying look at the lofty spirituality of Egyptian statues, or who recoil in disgust before the grandiose bestiality of Hindu bas-reliefs. Notwithstanding, there were artists who *felt* like those same worthy persons. I should not affirm that Michael Angelo would not have shrugged his shoulders before an Egyptian colossus, and I am quite sure that Phidias would have thrown Rembrandt's canvases into the fire. Archæology, in plastics, is classification in zoölogy. Unknown to itself, it has fundamentally recreated the great inner unity of the universal forms and permitted the universal man to affirm himself in the domain of the mind. That this universal man will one day realize himself in the social realm is a thing I shall beware of maintaining, although it is a possible thing. But that some men, among the great diversity of the idols,

can seize upon the one god who animates them all, is a thing as to which I may be permitted, I hope, to rejoice with them. Doubtless I shall even try soon to draw forth from the idols some of the features of this god.[1]

But not here. The scope is not broad enough. And I hope my reader is too impatient to approach the recital of the adventures which I have tried to relate for him, to consent to pick its flower before we have had the joy of breathing its perfume together. However, I should not like to have the slightest misunderstanding exist between him and me, as we stand at the threshold of this book. I have already warned him that I scarcely recognized myself in these opening pages of a work already old. They constitute, moreover, an obscure and often common plea for *the utility of art.* I want to dissipate the ambiguity. I have not ceased to think that art is useful. I have even strengthened my feeling as to that point. Not only is art useful, but it is, without the least doubt, the only thing that is, after bread, really useful to us all. Before bread, perhaps, for if we eat, it is really that we may keep up the flame which permits us to absorb —that we may recast it and spread it forth—the world of beneficent illusions which reveals itself and modifies itself, without a break, around us. From the caveman's or the lakeman's necklace of bones to the *image d'Epinal* tacked to the wall of the country tavern, from the silhouette of the aurochs dug in the wall of the grotto in Périgord to the ikon of the bed-

[1] *The Spirit of the Forms* (forthcoming).

room before which the muzhik keeps his lamp burning, from the war dance of the Sioux to the "Heroic Symphony," and from the graven design tinted with vermilion and emerald hidden in the night of the hypogees to the gigantic fresco which shines in splendor in the festival hall of Venetian palaces, the desire to arrest in a definite form the fugitive appearances wherein we think to find the law of our universe, as well as our own law, and through which we keep alive in ourselves energy, love, and effort—is manifested with a constancy and a continuity which have never abated. Whether this be in dance or song, whether it be in an image or in the narrative recited to a circle of auditors, it is always the pursuit of an inner idol —which we think, each time, to be the final pursuit and which we never end.

Philosophers, in speaking of this "disinterested play," affirm the irresistible need, which has urged us from the earliest times, to externalize the secret cadences of our spiritual rhythm in sounds or in words, in color or in form, in gesture or in steps. But the need asserts itself from this point of view as, on the contrary, the most universally interested of the deeper functions of the mind. Moreover, all games in themselves, even the most childish, are attempts to establish order in the chaos of confused sensations and sentiments. Man in his movement thinks that he adapts himself unceasingly to the surrounding world in its movement. And he believes that this adaptation takes place through the fleeting certitude he has of describing it forever in the intoxication of expression,

as soon as he imagines that he has grasped a phenomenon as a whole. Thus, what is most useful to men is play.

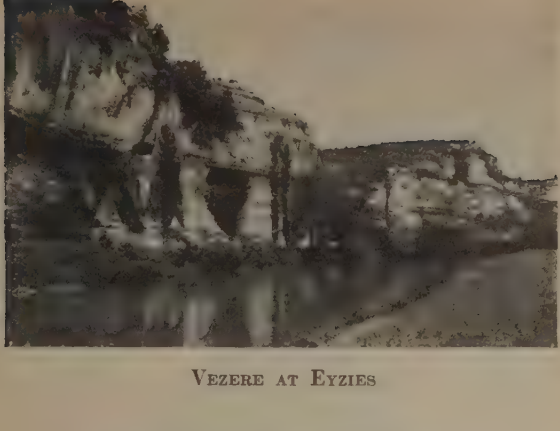
The love of play, and the search for it, and the ardent curiosity which is a condition of play, create civilization. The civilizations—I should have said, those oases sown the length of time or dispersed in space, now alone, now interpenetrating, fusing at other times, attempting schemes, one after another, for a unanimous spiritual understanding among men—a possible, probable understanding, but one that is undoubtedly destined, if it be realized, to decline, to die, to seek within itself and around it the elements of a renewal. A civilization is a lyric phenomenon, and it is by the monuments which it raises and leaves after it that we appreciate its quality and its grandeur. It is defined to the extent that it imposes itself upon us through an impressive, living, coherent, and durable style. What men understand almost unanimously as "civilization" at the present hour has nothing at all to do with it. The tool of industry—the railroad, the machine, electricity, the telegraph—is only a tool. Whole peoples can employ it for immediate and materially interested purposes, without any opening up in them, by that employment, of the deep springs of attention and emotion, of the passion for understanding, and the gift for expressing which alone lead to the great æsthetic style wherein a race communes for a moment with the spirit of the universe. From this point of view the Egypt of five thousand years ago, the China of five centuries ago are more civilized

than the America of to-day, whose style is still to be born. And the Japan of fifty years ago is more civilized than the Japan of to-day. It is even possible that Egypt, through the solidarity, the unity, and the disciplined variety of its artistic production, through the enormous duration and the sustained power of its effort, offers the spectacle of the greatest civilization that has yet appeared on the earth, and that all manifestations we call civilized since Egypt are only forms of dissolution and dissociation from her style. We should have to live ten thousand years more in order to know.

Style, in any case—that clear and harmonious curve which defines for us, on the road we follow, the lyrical steps established by those who preceded us, style—is but a momentary state of equilibrium. We cannot go beyond it. We can only replace it. It is the very negation of "progress," which is possible only in the realm of tools. Through the latter and in proportion to the number and the power of the means invented by man, "progress" increases the complexity of life and—by the same token—the elements of a new equilibrium. The moral order and the æsthetic order can, thanks to these tools, make up vaster symphonies, more mixed and complicated with influences and echoes, and served by a far greater number of instruments. But "moral progress," like "æsthetic progress," is merely bait which the social philosopher offers to the simple man in order to incite and increase his effort. Evil, error, ugliness, and folly will always, in the development of a new style, play their indis-

pensable role as a real condition of imagination, of meditation, of idealism, and of faith. Art is a lightning flash of harmony that a people or a man conquers from the darkness and the chaos which precede him, follow him, necessarily surround him. And Prometheus is condemned to seize the fire only that he may light up for a second the living wound in his side and the calm of his brow.

ANCIENT ART



VEZERE AT EYZIES

Chapter I. BEFORE HISTORY

I

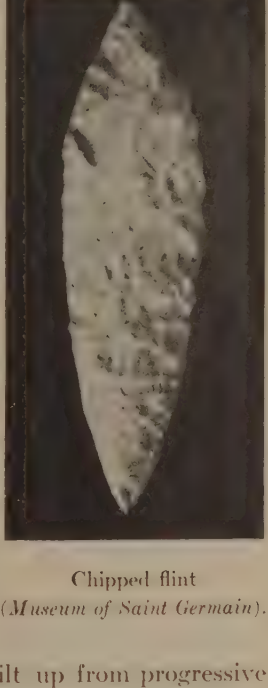
THE dust of bones, primitive weapons, coal, and buried wood the old human as well as solar energy come down to us tangled like roots in the fermentation of the dampness under the earth. The earth is the giver of life and the murderess, the diffused matter which drinks of death to nourish life. Living things are dissolved by her, dead things move in her. She wears down the stone, she gives it the golden pallor of ivory or of bone. Ivory and bone before they are devoured become rough as stone at her touch. The wrought flints have the appearance of big triangular teeth; the teeth of the engulfed monsters are like pulpy tubercles ready to sprout. The skulls, the vertebræ, and the turtle shells have the gentle and somber patina of the old sculptures with

their quality of absoluteness. The primitive engravings resemble those fossil imprints which have revealed to us the nature of the shell formations, of the plants

AUSTRIA (Cavern of Willendorff). Statuette of a woman, olithic limestone (*Vienna*).

and the insects which have disappeared, of turbans, arborescences, ferns, elytra, and nerved leaves. A prehistoric museum is a petrified garden where the

slow action of earth and water on the buried materials unifies the work of man and the work of the elements. Above lies the forest of the great deer—the open wings of the mind.[1]



Chipped flint
(Museum of Saint Germain).

The discomfiture which we experience on seeing our most ancient bones and implements mingled with a soil full of tiny roots and insects has something of the religious in it. It teaches us that our effort to extricate the rudimentary elements of a social harmony from animalism surpasses, in essential power, all our subsequent efforts to realize in the mind a superior harmony which, moreover, we shall not attain. There is no invention. The foundation of the human edifice is made of everyday discoveries, and its highest towers have been patiently built up from progressive generalizations. Man copied the form of his hunting

[1] The illustrating of this chapter having presented special difficulties, we offer our warmest thanks to Messrs. Capitan and Breuil, on one hand, and to the firm of Masson et Cie., on the other, without whom we should not have been able to carry through our task. The works of Abbé Breuil, most of all, constitute the basis which will henceforth be indispensable for the artistic illustrating of any book devoted to the prehistoric period. It is, thanks to his admirable pastels, that the troglodyte frescoes of Périgord and of Spain have been given back to us in what is most probably their original character.

and industrial implements from beaks, teeth, and claws; from fruits he borrowed their forms for his first pots. His awls and needles were at first thorns and fishbones; he grasped, in the overlapping scales of the fish, in the articulation and setting of bones, the idea of structure, of joints and levers. Here is the sole point of departure for the miracle of abstraction, for formulas wholly purified of all trace of experience, and for the highest ideal. And it is here that we must seek the measure at once of our humility and strength.

The weapon, the tool, the vase, and, in harsh climates, a coarse garment of skins—such are the first forms, foreign to his own substance, that primitive man fashions. He is surrounded by beasts of prey and is assailed constantly by the hostile elements of a still chaotic nature. He sees enemy forces in fire, in storms, in the slightest trembling of foliage or of water, in the seasons, even, and in day and night, until the seasons and day and night, with the beating of his arteries and the sound of his steps, have given him the sense of rhythm. Art is, in the beginning, a thing of immediate utility, like the first stammerings of speech; something to designate the objects which surround man, for him to imitate or modify in order that he may use them; man goes no farther. Art cannot yet be an instrument of philosophic generalization, since man could not know how to utilize it. But he forges that instrument, for he already abstracts from his surroundings some rudimentary laws which he applies to his own advantage.

The men and youths range the forests. Their

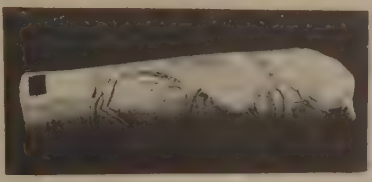
weapon is at first the knotty branch torn from the oak or the elm, the stone picked up from the ground. The women, with the old men and the children, remain hidden in the dwelling, an improvised halting place or grotto. From his first stumbling steps man comes to grips with an ideal —the fleeing beast which represents the immediate future of the tribe; the evening meal, devoured to make muscle for the hunters; milk for the mothers. Woman, on the contrary, has before her only the near and present reality- the meal to prepare; the child to nourish; the skin to be dried; later on, the fire that is to be tended. It is she, doubtless, who finds the first tool and the first pot; it is she who is the first workman. It is from her realistic and conservative role that human industry takes its beginnings. Perhaps she also assembles teeth and pebbles into necklaces, to draw attention to herself and to please. But her positivist destiny closes the horizon to her, and the first veritable artist is man. It is man, the explorer of plains and forests, the navigator of rivers, who comes forth from the caverns to study the constellations and the clouds; it is man, through his idealistic and revolutionary function, who is to take possession of the objects made by his companion, to turn them, little by little, into the instruments that express the world of abstractions which appears to him confusedly. Thus from the beginning the two great human forces realize that equilibrium which will never be destroyed; woman, the center of immediate life, who brings up the child and maintains the family in the tradition

necessary to social unity; man, the focus of the life of the imagination, who plunges into the unexplored mystery to preserve society from death through his directing of it into the courses of unbroken evolution.

Cavern of Bruniquel (Tarn-et-Garonne). Mammoth, carved reindeer horn (*Museum of Saint Germain*).

Masculine idealism, which later becomes a desire for moral conquest, is at first a desire for material conquest. For primitive man it is a question of killing animals in order to have meat, bones, and skins, and of charming a woman so as to perpetuate the species whose voice cries in his veins; it is a question of frightening the men of the neighboring tribe who want to carry off his mate or trespass on his hunting ground. To create, to pour forth his being, to invade surrounding life—in fact, all his impulses have their center in the reproductive instinct. It is his point of departure for all his greatest conquests,

his future need for moral communion and his will to devise an instrument through which he may adapt himself intellectually to the law of his universe. He already has the weapon—the plate of flint; he needs the ornament that charms or terrifies—bird plumes in the knot of his hair, necklaces of claws or teeth, carved handles for his tools, tatooings, bright colors decorating his skin.



SWITZERLAND (Kesslerloth). Reindeer grazing, engraved on reindeer horn (*Museum of Saint Germain*).

Art is born. One of the men of the tribe is skillful in cutting a form in a bone, or in painting on a torso a bird with open wings, a mammoth, a lion, or a flower. On his return from the hunt he picks up a piece of wood to give it the appearance of an animal, a bit of clay to press it into a figurine, a flat bone on which to engrave a silhouette. He enjoys seeing twenty rough and innocent faces bending over his work. He enjoys this work itself which creates an obscure understanding between the others and himself, between him and the infinite world of beings and of plants that he loves, because he is the life of that world. He obeys something more positive also—the need to set down certain acquisitions of primitive human science so that the whole of the tribe may profit by them. Words but inadequately describe to the old men, to the women gathered about, to the

children especially, the form of a beast encountered in the woods who is either to be feared or hunted. The artist fixes its look and its form in a few summary strokes. Art is born.

II

The oldest humanity known, which defines our entire race, inhabited the innumerable grottos of the high Dordogne, near the rivers full of fish and flowing through reddish rocks and forests of a region once thrown into upheaval by volcanoes. That was the central hearth; but colonies swarmed the whole length of the banks of the Lot, of the Garonne, of the Ariège, and even to the two slopes of the Pyrenees and the

GROTTO OF CHAFFAUD (Vienne). Does, engraved bone (*Museum of Saint Germain*).

Cévennes. The earth was beginning to tremble less from the subterranean forces. Thickly growing green trees filled with their healthy roots the peat bogs that hid the great skeletons of the last chaotic monsters. The hardening of the crust of the earth, the rains and the winds that were regularized by the woods, the

seasons with their increasingly regular rhythm, were introducing into nature a more apparent harmony. A suppler and more logical species, less submerged in primitive matter, had appeared little by little. If the cold waters, where the mammoth, the rhinoceros, and the lion of the caves came to drink, still harbored the hippopotamus, there were great numbers of horses, oxen, bison, wild goats, and aurochs living in the woods. The reindeer, the friend of the ice which descended from the Alps, the Pyrenees, and the Cévennes to the edge of the plains, lived there in numerous herds. Man had emerged from the beast in an overwhelming silence. He appeared about as he is to-day, with straight legs, short arms, a straight forehead, receding jaw, and a round and voluminous skull. By the action of the mind he is to introduce that harmony which was beginning to reign around him, into an imagined world which, little by little, would become his veritable reality and his reason for action.

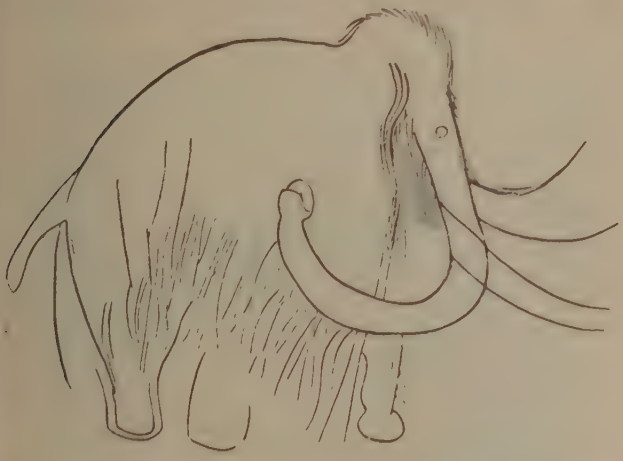
The primitive evolution of his conception of art is, as we may naturally understand, extremely obscure. At such a distance everything seems on the same plane, and the divisions of time we establish are doubtless illusory. The paleolithic period ended with the quaternary age, at least twelve thousand years before us, and the art of the troglodytes, at that distant epoch, had already attained the summit of its curve. The development of a civilization is slow in proportion as it is primitive. The first steps are those that are the most uncertain. The millions of

flaked axes found in the caverns and in the beds of rivers, the few thousands of designs engraved on bone or on reindeer horn, the carved hafts and the frescoes discovered on the walls of the grottos, evidently represent the production of a very long series of centuries. The variations of the images preserved cannot be explained only by the differences of individual temperaments. The art of the troglodytes is not made up of obscure gropings. It develops with a logic and an increasing intelligence about which we can only guess, and of which we can trace the great lines, but which we shall doubtless never be able to follow step by step.

What is sure is that the paleolithic artist belonged to a civilization that was already very old, one which sought to establish, through interpreting the aspects of the surroundings in which it was destined to live, the very law of these surroundings. Now no civilization, however advanced, has any other incentive or any other purpose. The reindeer hunter is not only the least limited of primitives, he is the first civilized man. He possessed art and fire.

In any case, the farther we descend with the geological strata into the civilizations of the caverns, the more it reveals itself as an organism coherent in its extent—from the Central Plateau to the Pyrenees—and coherent in its depth through its century-old traditions, its already ritualized customs, and its power of evolution in submission to the common law of strong, human societies. From layer to layer its set of tools improves, and its art, starting from the

humblest industry and culminating in the moving frescoes of the grottos of Altamira, follows the logical incline that proceeds from the ingenuous imitation of the object to its conventional interpretation. First



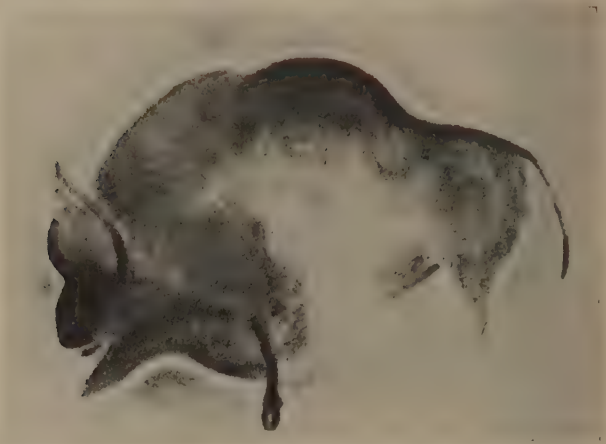
CAVERN OF COMBARRELLES (Dordogne). Mammoth, scratched on interior wall (*Revue de l'Ecole d'Anthropologie*, 1902).

comes sculpture, the object represented through all its profiles, having a kind of second real existence; then the bas-relief, which sinks and effaces itself until it becomes engraving; finally the great pictorial convention, the object projected on a wall.[1]

This suffices for the rejection of the customary comparisons. The reindeer hunter is not a contemporary primitive, polar or equatorial, still less is he

[1] Thus it is that the Venus of Willendorff, the most ancient human form in sculpture that we know, is probably several decades of centuries earlier, despite its admirable character, than the works of Vézère and of Altamira.

a child. The works that he has left us are superior to the greater part of the production of the Inoits, to all those of the Australians, and especially to those of children. The present-day primitive has not attained a stage so advanced, in his mental evolution. As to the child, he does nothing lasting; it is on sand or on scraps of paper that he traces his first lines, by chance, between other games. He has neither the



Fond de Gaume (Dordogne). Bison, in polychrome, fresco: after the pastel by Abbé Breuil in *La Caverne du Fond de Gaume* (Capitan, Breuil, and Peyrony).

will nor the patience nor, above all, the deep need that must exist before he can imprint on one hard substance with another hard substance the image he has in his mind. James Sully [1] has very well shown this; the child adheres to an almost exclusively sym-

[1] James Sully, *Studies in Childhood.*

bolic representation of nature, to a stammering series of ideographic signs which he changes at each new attempt; he has no care either for the relationships of the forms or for their proportions, or for the character of the object which he represents crudely, without

Fond de Gaume (Dordogne). Reindeer grazing, fresco (*Revue de l'Ecole d'Anthropologie*, 1902); after a pastel by Abbé Breuil.

studying it, without even casting a glance at it if it is within range of his eye. It is probable that he draws only from a spirit of imitation, because he has seen people draw or because he has seen pictures and knows that the thing is possible. If he were not deformed by the abuse of conventional language which takes place around him, he would model before he painted.

Among the reindeer hunters, it is quite rare to find an image of entirely infantile character. In fact, such an image must be the work of a bad imitator who has seen an artist of his tribe carving or engraving.

Or else, as in the south of Spain, it belongs to a decadent school, later than the great period, of which Altamira is doubtless the highest manifestation. It then presents, like all decadences, a double character of puerility quite comparable to that of the stammering attempts of the negroes of South Africa, and of artistic refinement, where the ideographic scheme is visibly pursued. The real childhood of humanity has left us nothing, because it was incapable, like the childhood of a man, of continuity in effort. The art of the troglodytes of Périgord is not this impossible art of human childhood, but the necessary art of human youth, the first synthesis which the world, naïvely interrogated, imposes on the sensibility of a man, and which he gives back to the community. It is the synthetic intuition of the beginnings of the mind, which rejoins, across a hundred centuries of analysis, the generalizations of the most heroic geniuses, in the most civilized ages. Does not natural philosophy confirm the greater part of the presentiments of the mythological cosmogonies?

Where should he find the elements of this first synthesis if not in his own life? Now the life of the reindeer hunter is hunting and fishing. He characterizes it by his whole art—sculpture, bas-relief, engraving, and fresco. Everywhere we find wild animals and fish. From these, which are associated with all his earthly actions, he draws that profound love for animal form which makes his work resemble natural sculptures—bone-structures twisted by the play of muscles, beautiful skeletons sculptured by the

atavistic powers of adaptation to function. All day long he sees these animals living, peaceful or hunted, grazing or fleeing; he sees the panting of their flanks, their jaws opening or shutting, their hair matted with blood or sweat, their skins wrinkled like trees or mossy like rocks. At evening, in his cavern, he skins the dead animals, he sees the bones appear under the torn flesh, the tendons shining on the hard surfaces; he studies the beautiful smooth vaults of the cavities and the heads of joints, the arch of the ribs, of the vertebræ, the round levers of the limbs, the thick armament of the pelvis and of the shoulder blades, the

Fond de Gaume (Dordogne). Wolf, in polychrome, fresco; after the pastel by Abbé Breuil in *La Caverne du Fond de Gaume* (Capitan, Breuil and Peyrony).

jaws sown with teeth. His hand, which works in ivory and horn, is familiarized by touch with skeletons, sharp ridges, rough curves, silent and sustained planes; and it is the joy of his hand to feel the same

projections and the same surfaces born of its own work. The artist, by great flakes, carves the handles of daggers, chisels the polished ivory into the forms of beasts, the mammoth with its four feet together, the reindeer, the wild goat, and skinned or living heads. Sometimes he even tries to rediscover in his material the forms of the woman he loves, of the female troglodyte whose haunches are broad, whose belly is covered with hair and broken down with maternity, whose warm flesh welcomes the fulfillment of his desire or lulls his fatigue.

Later, with the more rapid process of engraving, the field of exploration widens. The whole of the glacial fauna invades art. The mammoth, the cave bear, the bison, horse, aurochs, and especially the reindeer—the reindeer in repose or walking slowly, its head to the ground to crop the grass; the reindeer galloping, its nostrils to the wind, its horns on its back, fleeing before the hunter; sometimes the hunter himself, quite naked, hairy, armed with a spear and creeping toward the animal. Nothing surpasses the direct force of expression of some of these engravings. The line is drawn with a single stroke and bites deeply into the horn. The artist is often so sure of himself that he does not even join his lines, but merely indicates the direction of the principal ones which portray the attitude and mark the character. We see a horse's head made up simply of nostrils and jaws; the delicate legs of a reindeer with sharp hoofs, its horns spreading like seaweed or like great butterflies, sharp of breast and thin in the rump; hairy mammoths, on

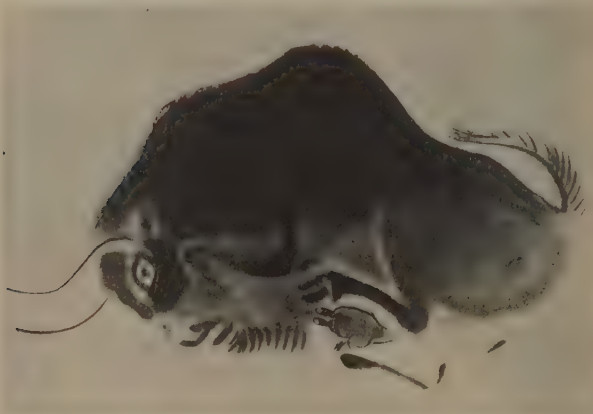
their massive feet, with vast curving spines, long trunk, small skull, and sharp little eyes; bison with their mountainous backs, their formidable neck and hard hocks; fighting beasts, running beasts, irresist-

FOND DE GAUME (Dordogne). Bison, fresco; after the pastel by Abbé Breuil (*Revue de l'Ecole d'Anthropologie*).

ible masses, wild flights under the branches—all the violent life of the hunter is evoked by these strong images, with their rude frame of rivers, great cool woods, grottos, dry days, and the cold scintillation of the night.

Never was a human society so thoroughly a part of its surroundings as the tribes of reindeer hunters. Hunting and fishing are at once the means and the purpose of life, and the rude existence is pursued even in the evening, in the cavern which forms part of the crust of the earth, and from which it was necessary to dislodge the lion and the bear. The tales of the hunt-

ers, the questions of the children, the work of the artists, the workmen in stone and in wood, the women, all tell the story of the forest and the water, from the skins and the furs stretched on the ground, from the implements of bone and ivory, the vegetable fibers, the beds of dry leaves, and the fagots of dead branches to the stalactites of the vault from which moisture drops. On winter evenings, the evenings of fires and legends, the dying or rekindling lights



ALTAMIRA (Spain). Female bison, charging, fresco; after the pastel by Abbé Breuil in *La Caverne d'Altamira* (Cartailhac and Breuil).

sketch fleeting apparitions on the shadowy background. They are the dead beasts who return, the beasts to be killed who defy the hunter, those of whose meat the tribe has eaten so much, of whose bones it has wrought so much that they become protecting divinities for the tribe. From that time it was thought

proper to set up their image in the most distant and dark corners of the cavern, whence their power would be increased by obscurity and mystery.[1] Fresco appears, broad synthetic paintings, ocherish, black, sulphurous, almost terrifying to behold in their shadows and through their unfathomable antiquity—reindeer and bison, horses and mammoths, sometimes composite monsters, men with the heads of animals. Sometimes, as at Altamira, we find all the beasts in a disordered troupe and, amid them, admirable figures that only a great artist could create, through definite, epitomized, purposeful drawing, through subtle modeling that undulates like watered silk, and through skillful transitions; the life of it is violent, the character is prodigious.

III

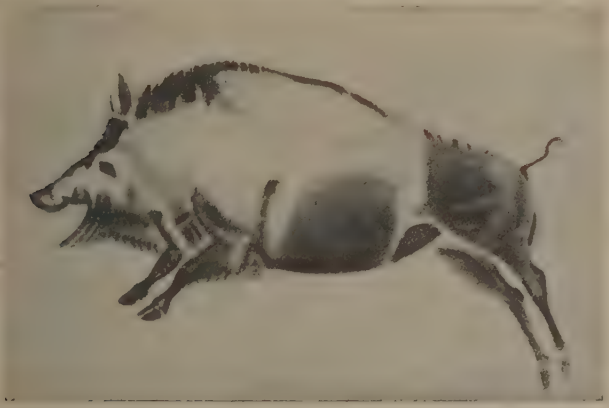
The fresco of the caverns is, therefore, the first visible trace, probably, of religion, which will henceforth pursue its course in common with art. It is born, like art, of the contact of sensation and of the world. At the beginning, everything, for the primitive, is natural, and the supernatural appears only with knowledge. Religion, thenceforward, is the miracle; it is what man does not know, has not yet attained, and later, what he wants to know and attain—his ideal. But before the coming of the supernatural, everything in nature explains itself because man lends to all forms, to all forces, his own

[1] Salomon Reinach, *L'Art et la Magie*.

will and his own desires. It is to attract him that the water murmurs, to frighten him that the thunder rolls, to awaken his anxiety that the wind makes the trees tremble, and the beast is, like himself, filled with intentions, with malice, with envy. So he must propitiate and adore its image, that it may let itself be captured and eaten. Religion does not create art; on the contrary, it is developed by art, and is planted triumphantly in the sensuality of man by giving a concrete reality to the happy or terrible images through which the universe appears to him. At base, what he adores in the image is his own power to render the abstraction concrete, and through it to increase his means of comprehension.

But religion is not always so docile. It sometimes revolts, and, to establish its supremacy, orders art to disappear. That is doubtless what happened in the Neolithic periods, sixty centuries perhaps after the waters of the deluge had engulfed the civilization of the reindeer. For a reason that is not yet well known, the air becomes warmer, the ice melts. The ocean currents doubtless modify their original course, western Europe grows warmer and the tepid water of the oceans, drawn up by the sun and carried by the winds towards the mountains, falls in torrents on the glaciers. Water streams through the valleys, the swollen rivers drown out the caverns, the decimated tribes flee from the disaster, follow the reindeer to the polar regions, or wander poverty-stricken and at random, driven from one resting place to another by the deluge or by hunger. With the daily struggle against elements

too strong for them, with the dispersal of families, the loss of traditions and of implements, discouragement comes, then indifference and the decline toward the lower grades of animalism, which had so painfully been climbed. When the surroundings become more favorable, when the earth dries in the sun, when the



ALTAMIRA (Spain). Wild boar galloping, fresco; after the pastel by Abbé Breuil in *La Caverne d'Altamira* (Cartailhac and Breuil).

sky clears and the withdrawing of the glaciers permits the grass to grow green and flourish in the moraines, everything is to be re-established—the supply of tools, shelter, social relationships, and the slow, obscure ascent toward the light of the mind. Where are the reindeer hunters, the first conscious society? The prehistoric middle ages give no answer.

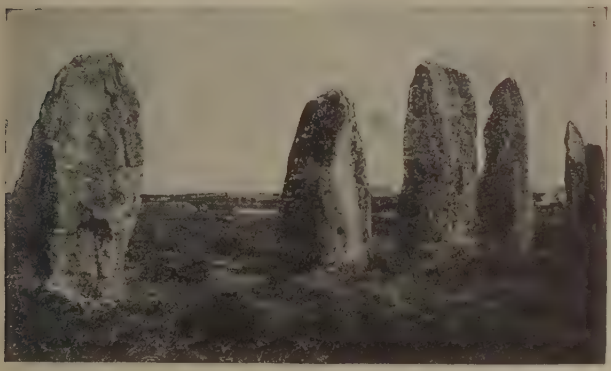
We must await another dawn to reveal the new humanity which has elaborated itself in the night.

It is, moreover, a paler dawn, chilled by a more positivist industry, a less powerful life; its religion is already turned from its natural source. The weapons and implements of stone that are found by millions in the mud of the lakes of Switzerland and eastern France, over which the re-established human tribes erected their houses to get shelter from hostile attacks, are now polished like the purest metal. Gray, black, or green; of all colors, of all sizes; axes, scrapers, knives, lances, and arrows — they have that profound elegance which always comes from close adaptation of the organ to the function which created it. The lake-dwelling society, which manufactured textiles and raised wheat, and was able to discover the ingenious system of dwellings built on piles, offers the first example of a civilization of predominantly scientific tendencies. The organization of life is certainly better regulated, more positive than in the ancient tribes of Vézère. But nothing appears of that ingenuous enthusiasm which urged the hunter of Périgord to recreate, for the joy of the senses and in the search for human communion, the beautiful moving forms among which he lived. There are, indeed, in the mud, among the polished stones, necklaces, bracelets, some potteries and numerous other witnesses to a very advanced industrial art, testifying to the economic

Pottery of the lake-men (*Museum of Saint Germain*).

character of that society; but not a sculptured figure, not an engraved figure, not a bibelot which would lead us to believe that the man of the lakes had any presentiment of the common origin and vast solidarity of all the sensible forms which fill the universe.

Doubtless when men had retired to the cities on the lakes, the beneficent contact with the tree and with



Menhirs at Plouhermel (Morbihan).

the beasts of the forest occurred less frequently than in the days of the split stone; unquestionably men were less often inspired by the spectacle of the living play of animal forms. But there is, in the failure of these men to reproduce these forms, more than a sign of indifference. There is a mark of reprobation and probably of religious prohibition. Already at the same epoch there appear in Brittany and in England those somber battalions of stone, menhirs, dolmens, cromlechs, which have not told their secret, but which

could scarcely signify anything else than an explosion of mysticism, a phenomenon which would be perfectly compatible, moreover—especially in a period of hard life with the positivist activity which the daily struggle for bread and shelter necessitates. The double, the primitive form of the soul, has made its appearance behind the material phantom of beings

Dolmen at Erdeven (Morbihan).

and objects. From that time onward the spirit is everything, the form is to be disregarded, then condemned; first, because the dwelling of the evil spirit is seen in it, then—much later, at the dawn of the great ethical religions—because in it will be seen the permanent obstacle to moral liberation, which is, all things considered, the same thing. Even before the beginning of history, there appears, in groups of men, that need to destroy the equilibrium between our

science and our desires, a need that is perhaps essential for the demolishing of a wearied society, in order that a field may be left free for newer races and conceptions.

However that may be, nothing that suggests the human form has been picked up under the dolmens, which also shelter flint axes and some jewels and—ten or twelve centuries before our era—the first metallic arms, helmets, and bucklers, bronze and iron swords. There is, indeed, in Aveyron, a sculptured menhir that represents, with extreme puerility, a female figure; there are, indeed, at Gavrinis, in Morbihan, on other menhirs, moving arabesques like the lines on the surface of low water, undulations or the tremblings of seaweed, which must be signs of conjuring or of magic. But, aside from these few exceptions, Celtic architecture remains mute. We shall never know what force it was that raised

NEOLITHIC AGE. Polished flint (*British Museum*).

these enormous tables of stone, erected these virile emblems to the sky, this whole hard army of silence which seems to have grown unaided from the soil, as if to reveal the circulation of the lava which makes the earth tremble.

With the last-raised stones ends the story of the prehistoric period in the Western world. Rome is coming to clear off the forests, bringing in its steps the Orient and Greece, dying Greece, and Assyria and Egypt already dead, after each had attained an incomparable summit. Such is the rhythm of history. On this soil, fifteen thousand years ago, lived a civilized society. It dies without leaving visible traces; five or six thousand years are needed for another rudiment of a social organism to be born in the same countries. But already, in the valley of the Nile, in the valleys of the Euphrates and the Tigris, a powerful human harvest has grown up, which flourishes for a moment, only to wither little by little. Athens mounts to the peak of history at the hour when the moors of Brittany were being covered with their dull flowers of stone; Rome comes to reap them; Rome goes down in the flood that rolls from the north; then the rhythm quickens—great peoples grow up on the cadavers of great peoples. In duration and in extent, history is like a boundless sea of which men are the surface and whose mass is made up of countries, climates, the revolutions of the globe, the great primitive springs, the obscure reactions of peoples, one on the other. When humanity shall begin to write its annals, the abysses will be filled up, the sea will seem quieter.

But perhaps this is nothing but illusion. A people is like a man. When he has disappeared nothing is left of him unless he has taken the precaution to leave his imprint on the stones of the road.

ART OF GAUL. The Gallic Hercules (*Museum of Aix*).

The Nile

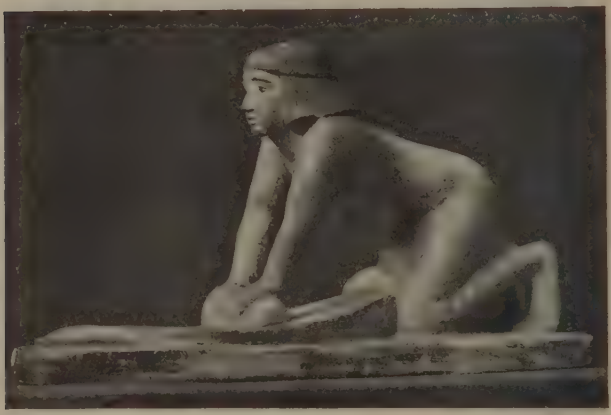
Chapter II. EGYPT

I

EGYPT is the first of those undulations which civilized societies make on the surface of history undulations that seem to be born of nothingness and to return to nothingness after having reached a summit. She is the most distant of the defined forms which remain upon the horizon of the past. She is the true mother of men. But although her achievement resounded throughout the whole duration and extent of the ancient world, one might say that she has closed herself within the granite circle of a solitary destiny. It is like a motionless multitude, swelled with a silent clamor.

Egypt sinks without a cry into the sand, which has taken back, successively, her feet, her knees, her thighs,

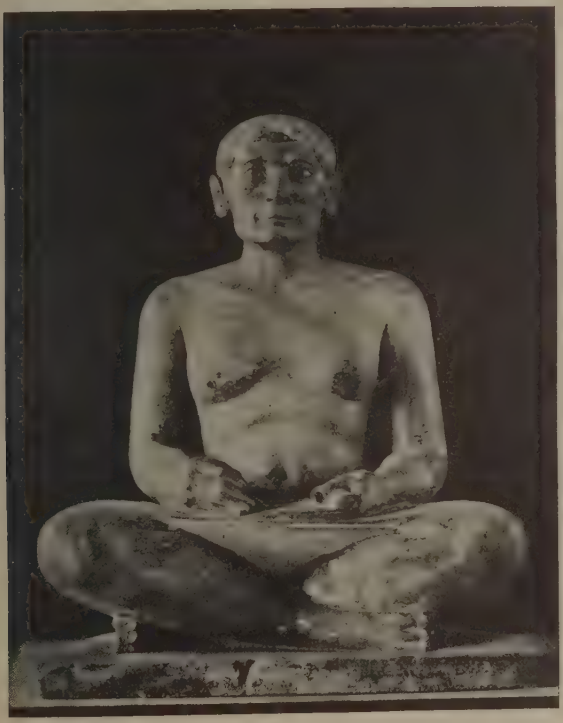
and her flanks, with only her breast and brow projecting. The sphinx has still, in his crushed visage, his inexorable eyes, outlined by rigid lids, which look inward as well as outward into the dis-



Ancient Empire (xxx to xxv Century B.C.). Woman kneading (*Florence, Archæological Museum*).

tance, from elusive abstractions to the circular line where the curve of the globe sinks downward. To what depth do his foundations go, and how far around him and below him does history descend? He seems to have appeared with our first thoughts, to have followed our long effort with his mute meditation, to be destined to survive our last hope. We shall prevent the sand from covering him entirely because he is a part of our earth, because he belongs to the appearances amid which we have lived, as far back as our memories go. Together with the artificial mountains

with which we have sealed the desert near him, he is the only one of our works that seems as permanent as the circle of days, the alternation of the seasons, and the stupendous daily drama of the sky.



ANCIENT EMPIRE (XXX to XXV Century B.C.). The seated scribe (*Louvre*).

The immobility of this soil, of this people whose monotonous life makes up three-quarters of the adventure of humanity, seems to have demanded lines of

stone to bind it, and these lines define the soil and the people even before we know their history. Everything around the pyramids endures. From the Cata-

ANCIENT EMPIRE (2500 B.C.?) Hawk's head, in gold (*Cairo Museum*). After an illustration in *Die Plastik der Ægypter* (published by Cassirer).

racts to the Delta, the Nile is alone between two identical banks, without a current, without a tributary, without an eddy, rolling on, from the depths of the centuries, its regular mass of water. Fields of barley, of wheat, of corn, palm trees, sycamores. A pitiless blue sky, from which the fire flows ceaselessly

Ancient Empire (xxv Century B.C.?). Wooden statue, detail (*Museum of the Louvre*).

in sheets, almost dark during the hours of the day when the eye can look at it without difficulty, lighter at night when the rising tide of stars spreads its light there. Torrid winds rise from the sands. In the light, where the hot air vibrates, shadows are sharply outlined on the ground, and the unalterable colors — indigos, baked reds, and sulphurous yellows, turned to molten metal by twilights of flame, have only, as their transparent veil, the periodically changing green and gold of the cultivated land. A silence in which voices hesitate as if they feared to break crystal walls. Beyond these six hundred leagues of fixed and powerful life, the desert — without any other visible limit than the absolute circle which is also the horizon of the sea.

The desire felt there to seek and give form to eternity, imposes itself on the mind the more despotically since nature retards death itself in its necessary acts of transformation and recasting. The granite is unbroken. Beneath the soil are petrified forests. In that dry air, wood that has been abandoned retains its living fibers for centuries, cadavers dry up without rotting. The inundation of the Nile, the master of the country, symbolizes, each year, perpetual resurrection. Its rise and fall are as regular as the apparent march of Osiris, the eternal sun, who arises each morning from the waters and disappears each evening in the sands. From the 10th of June to the 7th of October he pours on the calcined countryside the same fat, black mud, the mud which is the father of life.

The Egyptian people never ceased to contemplate

death. It offered the spectacle without precedent, and without another example to follow it, of a race intent for eighty centuries on arresting the movement of the universe. It believed that organized forms alone died, amid an immovable nature. It accepted the world of the senses only so long as it seemed to

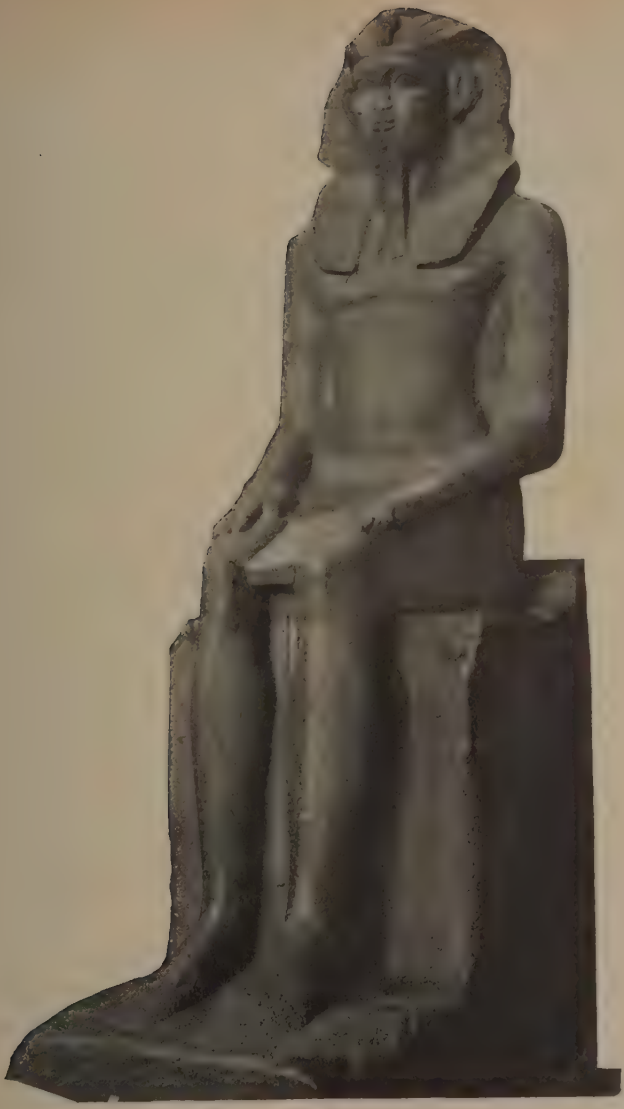
MIDDLE EMPIRE (XVII Century). Scribes
(*Florence, Archæological Museum*).

endure. It pursued the persistence of life in its changes of aspect. It imagined alternate existences for itself. And the desire all men have to survive mortal death caused the Egyptians to endow the soul with that individual eternity of which the duration of cosmic phenomena gave them the vain appearance.

In their estimation man entered upon his true life at death. But, no less than in all the conceptions of

immortality which succeeded theirs, did the desire of the Egyptians for immortality escape the irresistible need to assure a material envelope to the ever-living spirit. It was, therefore, necessary to construct a secret lodging, where the embalmed body should be sheltered from the elements, from beasts of prey, and especially from men. It must have with it its familiar objects food and water; it was necessary above all that its image, the unchangeable envelope of the double which should not leave it again, should accompany it into the final shadow. And since nothing dies, it was necessary to shelter forever the symbolic divinities expressing the immutable laws and the resurrection of appearances Osiris, fire, and the heavenly bodies, the Nile and the sacred animals which regulate the rhythm of their migration by the rhythm of its tides and its silences.

Egyptian art is religious and funerary. It began with the strangest collective madness in history. But since its poem to death lives, it touches the highest wisdom. The artist saved the philosopher. Temples, mountains raised by the hands of men, the Nile's own cliffs cut into sphinxes, into silent figures, dug out into labyrinthine hypogees, make a living alley of tombs to the river. All Egypt is there, even present-day Egypt which has required the most unchanging of the great modern religions; all Egypt, with its broken enigmas, its cadavers buried like treasures, perhaps a billion mummies lying in the darkness. And that Egypt which wanted to eternalize its soul with its bodily form is dead. The Egypt that does



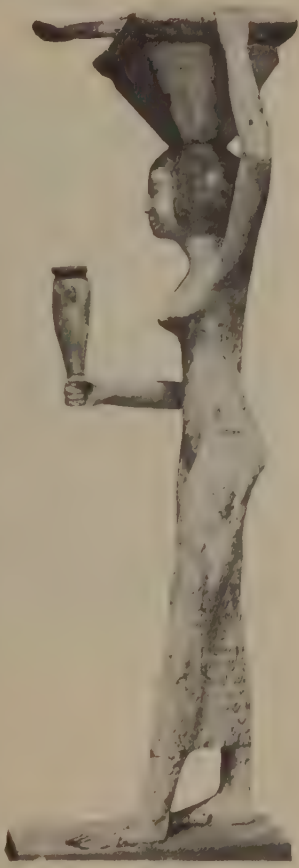
MIDDLE EMPIRE (XVII Century B.C.). Colossus of Sowekhotep III (*Louvre*).

not die is the one which gave to stoneware, to granite, and to basalt the form of its mind. Thus the human soul perishes with its human envelope. But as soon as it is capable of cutting its imprint in an external material—stone, bronze, wood, the memory of generations, the paper which is recopied, the book which is reprinted and which transmits from century to century the heroic word and the songs—it acquires that relative immortality which endures so long as those forms shall endure in which our world has continued long enough to permit us to define it, and, through those forms, to define ourselves.

II

The temple, which sums up Egypt, has the categorical force of the primitive syntheses which knew no doubt, and by that very fact expressed the only truth we know as durable—that of instinctive life in its irresistible affirmation. Formed by the oasis, the Egyptian soul repeated the essential teachings of the oasis on the walls and in the columns of the temple. It shaped the granite of the temple into rectangular masses which rose in a block to the hard line of the angles, with the profile of the cliffs, with the straight-lined course of the river, with the hot sap that made the palm trees tower over the fields of emerald, of gold, and of vermilion. Dogma, which is a step, an ancient certitude confined within formulas open to our senses for the repose of our spirit, assumes invincible power when it is submitted for the adora-

tion of the multitudes in a garb in which they find again their true life, their familiar horizons, and the very material of the places where they pass their lives and whence their hope is born. The priest can make his house of the dogma, which the desire of men has materialized. He can insure his power by installing the god in the smallest, darkest, most secret retreat of the edifice. The worshiper will accept it, if he recognizes the visible face of his accustomed existence in the thousands of other mute gods that border the rigid avenues leading to the giant pylons, that people the courts and the porticos, and that are men mingled with the monsters of the oasis and the desert, lions, rams, jackals, cynocephali, and hawks. Amid the thick columns, laid low to-day by conquerors and covered by the waters and by sand, or still lifting the formidable discloated skeletons of the



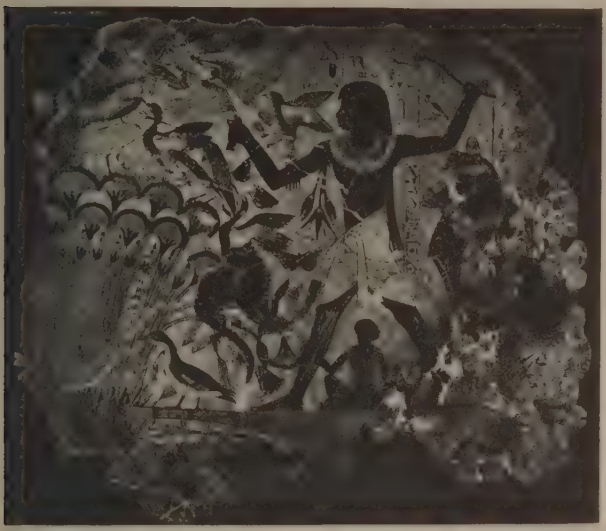
MIDDLE EMPIRE (XVI Century B.C.). The bearer of offerings (*Louvre*).

hypo-style halls high above the desert, he will find himself. He will recognize his monotonous palm groves, his strange woods, his thickets with open spaces, the straight, thickset trunks of his trees with heavy crowns

New Empire (xv Century B.C.). The herd, mural painting from Thebes (*British Museum*).

and opulent, pulpy fiber, crushed between the hardened mud of the ground and the vertical rays of the sun. The columns have the gathered thrust, the rough-grained roundness of the palm trees and the short, flattened surface of their tops. Leaves of lotus assembled into bouquets, leaves of the papyrus, palms, and rows of dates swell the capitals with the compact and powerful life of tropical vegetation. On looking beneath his feet he will see again the water lilies, the lotus, the heavy plants, the flora of the fecund river where moor hens and ducks thrive, as well as fish and crocodiles; he will perceive the lizards,

the snakes, the uræus that warms itself on the hot sand where the red-brown elytra of the scarabs sow bits of metal. And when he raises his eyes it will be to divine, below the familiar constellations that sow the blue space, the birds of the solitudes, the slender



New Empire (xv Century B.C.). The birds, mural painting from Thebes (*British Museum*).

ibis, the vulture, the symbolic hawk suspended on rigid wings between the sky and the desert. Everywhere, on the heights of walls, columns, obelisks, everywhere—living script will flower for the joy of his senses, in painted bas-relief, in hieroglyphic inscriptions. Its opaque emeralds and its somber turquoises, its burnt reds, its sulphur, and its gold will repeat

to him the science, the literature, and the history which his ancestors were so long in making with their blood, their bones, their love, their memory, and the fearful or charming forms which accompanied them.

Entrenched behind this formal language, the priest may surround his action with a mystery by which he

NEW EMPIRE (XV Century B.C.) Colossal head of Amenothes III (*Louvre*).

profits. He knows much. He knows the movements of the heavens. He arranges his temple as an observatory, protected by lightning conductors. He possesses the great principles of geometry and triangulation. But his science is secret. All that these people know of it is revealed by certain tricks of

spiritualism and of magic which mask the sometimes puerile and often profound meaning of the occult philosophy which the hieroglyphs and the symbolic figures are meant to eternalize on the face of the desert.

New Empire. Hawk (*Louvre*).

The Pharaoh, the human form of Osiris, is the instrument of the theocratic caste—which overwhelms him with power so as to domesticate him. Below it and him, with some intermediaries, officers, chiefs of cities or of villages, governors armed with their batons, is the multitude. For a few hours of repose in the burning night, on the ground of hardened mud, for bread and water, they have nothing but the life of the enslaved plowman or reaper, mason or stonecutter—forced labor and blows. A hundred generations are used up to build the pyramids, men are broken at tasks beyond the strength of man, women are deformed before their age because they have been too miserable and have borne too many children, children are turned aside and warped before birth under the weight of a servitude centuries old. A frightful nightmare. In the far background there is the bare hope of future metamorphoses, a troubled and flickering light for the poor man who will have no tomb.

How is it that, in this hell, the Egyptian did not seek and find the dangerous consolation of absolute spiritualism? The living desire is stronger than death. Naturalistic and polytheistic from its origin, his religion retained the love of the form upon which we base our hope. His statues gave to mystery an indestructible skeleton, and he never adored his gods save under animal or human forms. The surroundings in which he had to live did not permit him to become absorbed in unrestrained contemplation. The daily struggle for bread is the surest of positivist educations. As a matter of fact, nature is ungrateful in Egypt. It is only by incessant effort and thanks to resources constantly renewed, in their ingenuity and courage, that the Egyptian learned to utilize to his profit the periodical excesses of the Nile. He had to put into practice a study, centuries old, of the habits of the river, of the consistency and the qualities of the mud; he had to undertake formidable works, dikes, embankments, artificial lakes, irrigating canals, the cutting of sandstone and of granite; he had to continue these works ceaselessly and begin them again to prevent them from being buried under the deposits of the river, from being swallowed up and disappearing. The pyramids reveal the incomparable power of his engineers. And if the hardness of his life turned his mind toward death, at least during his passage over the earth he left the impress of a profound genius for geometry.

A strange people, expressing, in theorems of basalt, the most vast, the most secret, the most vague aspira-

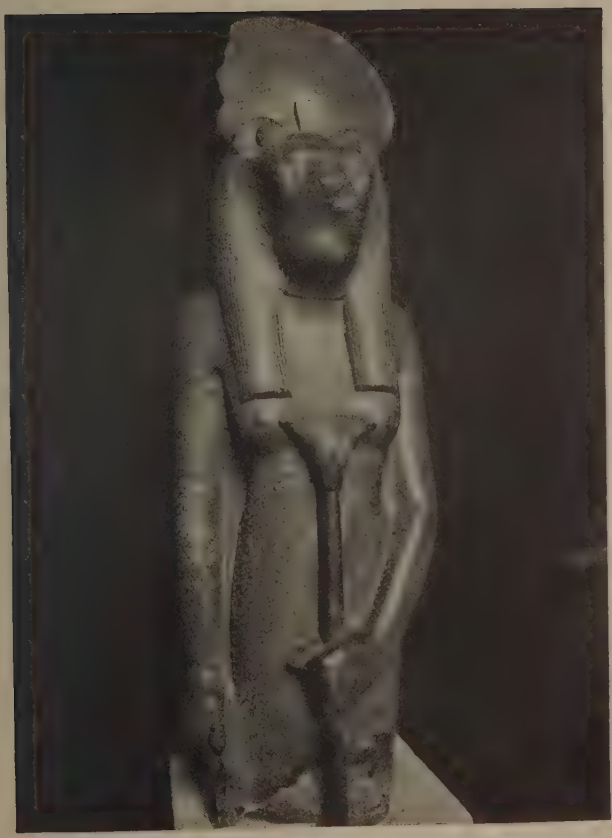
tions of its inner world! The spirit of Egypt is absolute and somnolent like the colossuses stretched out on the stone of its tombs. And yet, outside of the mystery of ever-renewing life, forever like itself in all epochs, under all skies, there is nothing that is not

NEW EMPIRE. Ibis, bronze statuette (*Louvre*).

human and accessible to our emotion in the radiant silence which seems to well up from these motionless figures with their definite planes. The Egyptian artist is a workman, a slave who works under the baton like the others; he is not initiated into the mystic sciences. We know a thousand names of kings, of priests, of war chiefs, and of city chiefs; we do not

know one name of those who have expressed the real thought of Egypt, that which lives forever in the stone of the tombs. Art was the anonymous voice, the mute voice of the crowd, ground down and observing within itself the tremor of the mind and of hope. Sustained by an irresistible sentiment of the life it was forbidden to spread out, it allowed that sentiment to burn—with all the power of its compressed faith—into depth.

It is not true—startling and illuminating as are the metaphysical intuitions that, with their power, the priestly castes pass on through time, in Egypt as in Chaldea—it is not true that the mysterious images which symbolize these intuitions owe to them their beauty. With the artist, instinct is at the beginning of everything. It is life, in its prodigious movement wherein matter and mind merge without his thinking of disuniting them, that lights the spark in him and directs his hand. It is for us to disengage from the work of art its general signification as we disengage it from sensuous, social, and moral life, which it sums up for us in a flash. The Egyptian artist followed certain ideas, more often restrictive than active, which the priest dictated to him. When the priest demanded that a lion with a human head be cut in granite, or a man with the head of an eagle and open hands through which the flame of the spirit seemed to pass into the world, he jealously kept to himself the occult meaning of the form and the gestures, and the sculptor drew the enthusiasm which made the material quiver from the material alone and from the faith he had in



New Empire (xiv Century B.C.). Sekhmet (*Louvre.*)

the myths he animated. If the monster was beautiful, it was because the sculptor was living. The profound occultist counted for nothing in it, the naive artist for everything.

We know really only what we have learned by ourselves, and personal discovery is our sole source of enthusiasm. The highest generalizations have started with the most obscure and strongest sentiment, to purify themselves step by step as they rise to intelligence. They are open to the artist who must, logically and fatally, take his course toward them. But the faculty of giving life to the language in which philosophers communicate these generalizations to us is not logically and fatally imparted to the intellectual. The generalization is never a point of departure, it is a tendency; and if the artist had begun with occultism, his work would have been condemned to the stiffness of death. Now, even when stiff as a cadaver, by the will of the priest, the Egyptian statue lives through the love of the sculptor. Only human evolution proceeds in a block, and the instinct of the artist accords with the mind of the philosopher in order to give to their abstract or concrete creations the same rhythm which expresses a general need felt in common.

III

However that may be, it was the crowd and nothing but the crowd which spread over the wood of the sarcophagi and over the compact tissue of the hypogees, the pure, living, colorful flowers of its soul. It whis-

pered its life in the deep shadows so that that life should shine in the light of our torches when we open the hidden sepulchers. The fine tomb was dug out for the king or the rich man, it is true, and his was the luxurious existence to be traced on the walls, in funeral

New Empire. Great temple of Thebes.

processions, in adventures of war or of hunting or in the work of the fields. He was to be shown surrounded by his slaves, by his farm workers, by his familiar animals; it was necessary to tell how his bread was made, how his beasts were cut up by the butcher, how his fish were caught, how his birds were captured, how his fruits were offered him, and how his wives made their toilet. And the crowd of artisans worked in obscurity; they thought to tell the charm, the power, the happiness, the opulence, and the life of the master;

they told, above all, their misery, but also their fecund activity, utility, intelligence, inner wealth, and the furtive grace of their own life.

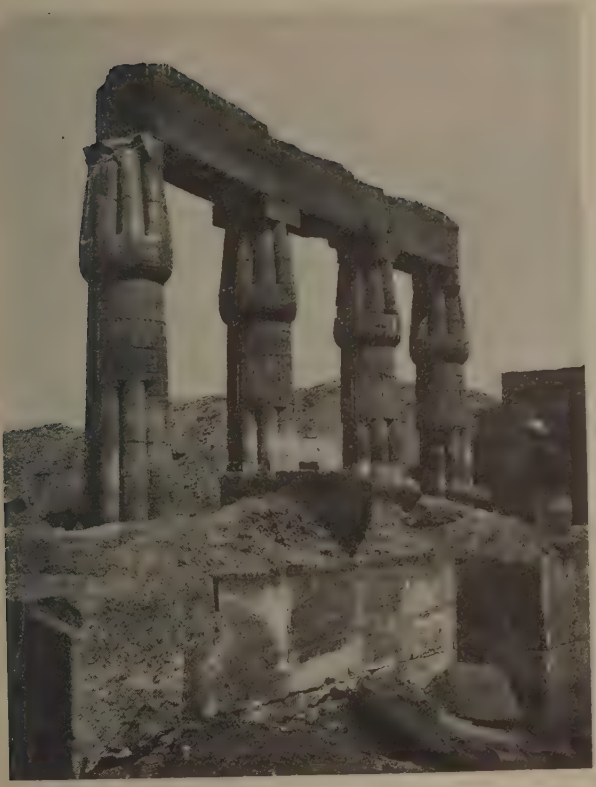
What marvelous painting! It is freer than the statuary, which is intended almost solely to render the image of the god or the deceased. Despite its abstract grand style it is familiar, it is intimate; sometimes it turns to caricature; always it is malicious or tender, like this naturally human and good people, which is crushed little by little by theocratic force, and which descends into itself to consider its humble life. In the modern sense of the word there is no science of composition, no sense of perspective. Egyptian drawing is a writing that must be learned. But let one know it well, with its silhouettes whose heads and legs are always in profile while their shoulders and breasts are always in front view, and then see how all these stiff silhouettes move, with what ingenuousness they live, how their silence is peopled with animation and murmur! An extremely well-organized plan, sure, decisive, precise, but quivering. When the form appears, especially the nude form, or as it is divined through a transparent shirt, the artist suspends his whole life in it, that nothing but a light of the spirit may shine from his heart, one which shall illumine only the highest summits of memory and of sensation. Truly, that continuous contour, that single undulating line, so pure, so nobly sensual, which evinces so discreet and strong a sense of character, of mass, and of movement, has the appearance of being traced in the granite by the intelligence alone, without

NEW EMPIRE (XIV Century B.C.). Portrait of a woman (*Florence, Archæological Museum*).

the help of a tool. Then come streaming the deep blues, emeralds, ochres, golden yellows, and vermilions —lightly, never thickly applied. It is like perfectly

New Empire (xiv Century B.C.). A princess, stone (*Berlin Museum*). After an illustration in *Die Plastik der Ægypter.*

clear water into which one would let fall, without stirring it by a tremor, unchangeable colors: they do not muddy it, but let the plants and pebbles at the bottom be seen.



New Empire. Temple of Touthmes III at Karnak.

The intensity of the sentiment, the logic of the structure break the chains of hieratism and the impulse to style. These trees, these stiff flowers, this whole conventional world has the heavy movement of the fruitful seasons, of the seed as it returns to life. Egyptian art is perhaps the most impersonal that exists. The artist effaces himself. But he has such an innate sense of life, a sense so directly moved and so limpid that everything of life which he describes seems defined by that sense, to issue from the natural gesture, from the exact attitude, in which one no longer sees stiffness. His impersonality resembles that of the grasses which tremble at the level of the ground or of the trees bowing in the wind with a single movement and without resistance, or that of the water which wrinkles into equal circles all moving in the same direction. The artist is a plant that gives fruits similar to those of other plants, and as full of savor and of nourishment. And the convention which dogma imposes upon him is not apparent, because that which issues from his being is animated by the very life of his being, healthy and swelling with juice as a product of the soil.

What he recounts is his life itself. The workmen with their tanned skin, their muscular shoulders, nervous arms, and hard skulls work wholeheartedly, even when the rod is used; their faces remain gentle

the smooth-shaven faces with the prominent cheeks; and it is not without a kind of fraternal irony that the artisan decorator or statue maker, who has represented himself so often, shows them busy at their task, rowers

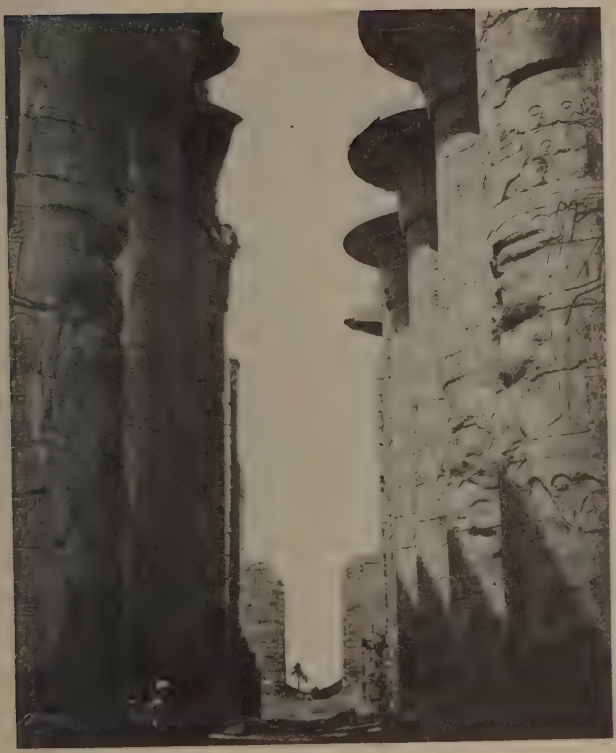
sweating, butchers cutting and sawing, masons assembling bricks of baked mud, herdsmen leading their passive beasts or delivering the females, fishermen, hunters, jovial farmhands holding up frantic ducks

New Empire (xiii Century B.C.). Temple of Ibsamboul.

by the tips of their wings and squirming rabbits by their ears, cramming fat geese, carrying cranes in their arms and holding their beaks closed with a firm fist so as to prevent them from screaming. We see the rearing of the heads, the ambling or mincing gaits, hear the bleating, the bellowing, and the sound of wings. The domestic animals—the oxen, asses, dogs, and cats—have their massive or peaceful or joyous or supple look, their unceasing rumination, the tremor of the skin or of their ears, their undulation as they

creep, and the silence and surety with which they stretch their paws. The panthers walk as if on velvet, pushing out their flat heads. The ducks and geese waddle, digging and quacking with their flat bills. The stupid fish gape in the drawn nets; the trembling water is transparent, and the women who come to dip it up in their jars or the animals who plunge into it are saturated with its coolness. Oranges and dates have their weight in baskets which are held up by arms as pure as the stem of a young plant, and which are balanced like flowers. The women, when they bedeck themselves or moisten their slim brushes to rouge their mistresses, have the air of reeds bending down to the dew in the grass. The world has the silent shudder of the morning.

This natural poetry, fundamentally ardent and familiar, is carried by the Egyptians into everything that comes from their fingers—into their jewels, their little intimate sculpture, those innumerable knick-knacks which encumber their sepulchers, where they follow the dead person to whom they had belonged. And it is in the domestic objects of the kitchen and the workshop. All their fauna, all their flora live again there with that same very sensual and very chaste sentiment; all is motionless and alive; and all has the same profundity. Whatever their material—bronze or wood, ivory, gold, silver, or granite—they preserved, in the matter wrought, its weight and its delicacy, its freshness if of the vegetable world, its grain if a mineral. Their spoons resemble leaves abandoned at the water's edge; their jewels, cut into



New Empire (xiv Century B.C.). Hypostyle Hall of Karnak.

the shapes of hawks, reptiles, and scarabs, have the look of those colored stones that one picks up in the bed of rivers, on the seashore and in the neighborhood of volcanoes. Underground Egypt is a strange mine. It breeds living fossils which are like the crystallization of organic multitudes.

IV

But all the intimacy, all the furtive charm of its spirit is hidden there, like the fellah in his mud warren, far from the palaces and the temples. On the surface of the soil we get the philosophic Egypt. Only under the Ancient Empire, five or six thousand years ago the Memphite school of sculpture essayed an expression of every-day existence. Egypt remembered old epochs of liberty, perhaps, before the sphinx himself, epochs of which we shall some day find traces under ten thousand years of alluvial deposits, lower than the foundations of the pyramids. Art, moreover, is always realistic at its beginnings. It does not yet know how to form those synthetic images, made up of the thousands of forms encountered on the long ascending road toward civilization, which art tries to realize as soon as it gets to the threshold of the general idea. Primitive man is almost solely concerned with his own life. Certainly he makes his attempt at résumés of sensations, but at résumés of things before his eyes, not of those which pass beyond the vision of the moment. It is in order to characterize well visible forms that he leaves nothing of them

but the summits of their undulations and of their expressive projections. The "Seated Scribe," which is of that ancient epoch, is of a terrifying truthfulness, in the man's direct application to the task he accom-

NEW EMPIRE (XIII Century). Sarcophagus of Rameses III, detail (*Louvre*).

plishes. He is not yet a type of average humanity; he is already the average type of a profession and a caste. His attention to his work, his suspended energy, that arrested life which makes his face flame like a

torch and that animates his fixed body are due to the planes which define him, and to the trenchant mind, free of disquietude, of the man who cut them. Of the same period are the peasants who march stick in hand, the men and women who start, side by side on the voyage of death, as they embarked on the voyage of life.

The Egyptian of that time possessed the equilibrium of his functions. Each wheel of the social machine acted, at that moment, with a vigor and an automatism which marked a life that was spontaneously disciplined, but free to define itself.

The classic sculpture came into existence only under the Middle Empire when Thebes had dethroned Memphis. From that moment and until the end of the world of the Nile, it was scarcely more than funerary and religious: statues of gods and statues of doubles. The story of the harvest, of the active work of the men and animals of the plow, of boudoir and household cares, of the adventures of every-day life, was left to painting and to the workmen of art. The sculptor of the gods was indeed a workman too, but he was raised, by the importance of his task and the strength of his faith, well above his misery. One might say that he had turned his back on the oasis, that he contemplated only the regularity of the days and the years, the sleeping and the awakening of the seasons, of the river, the sad desert, the impassible face of the sky.

We must not be too greatly surprised at seeing him thus different from the man who gave that account

of the scribe with so much passionate attention. From afar, Egyptian art seems changeless and forever like itself. From near by, it offers, like that of all the other peoples, the spectacle of great evolutions, of progress toward freedom of expression, of researches in imposed hieratism. Egypt is so far from us that it all seems on the same plane. One forgets that there are fifteen or twenty centuries, the age of Christianity—between the "Seated Scribe" and the great classic period, twenty-five or thirty centuries, fifty, perhaps—twice the time that separates us from Pericles and Phidias—between the pyramids and the Saite school, the last living manifestation of the Egyptial ideal.

New Empire. Woman seated, bronze statuette (*Louvre*).

The arresting of Egyptian sculpture in the movement of free discovery, sketched with so much vigor by the Memphite school, was doubtless provoked by a long historical preparation whose elements are too little known for us to define them with sufficient precision. The Ancient Empire was peaceful. The Theban Empire is warlike. It draws its authority more directly from the priestly caste, in order to retain

the obedience of the industrious and gentle people whom it wanted to use in its ambition for conquest. The theological mystery becomes denser. Dogma, growing more fixed, limits the flight of sculpture and, by imposing limits upon it, condemns it to research of a restricted type, which will narrow it more and more. It becomes the religious expression of a people of engineers. The statues will define the permanent aspect of Egypt, arrest life between regular dikes, cause the world to begin and end with them as the cultivated land ends and the desert begins with the limit of the river mud. Egyptian sculpture becomes a changeless architectonic frame; a century-old study of form, having penetrated the laws of its structure, has affixed this frame which will henceforth enclose the portrait of the god or the portrait of the deceased, the dwelling place of the double. Everything changes. Forms are born and effaced on the surface of the earth as easily as figures on a blackboard. There is nothing changeless save the almost mathematical relationships which animate them, binding them together with the invisible chain of abstraction. The great sculpture of Egypt materializes that abstraction and formulates in granite a geometrical ideal that seems as durable as the laws which govern the course of the heavenly bodies and the rhythm of the seasons.

Sculpture is at once the most abstract and the most positive of plastic expressions—positive, because it is impossible to evade the difficulties of the task through verbal artifices and because the form will live only on condition that it be logically constructed, from what-

ever side one considers it; abstract, because the law of that construction is revealed to us only by a series of more and more generalized mental operations.

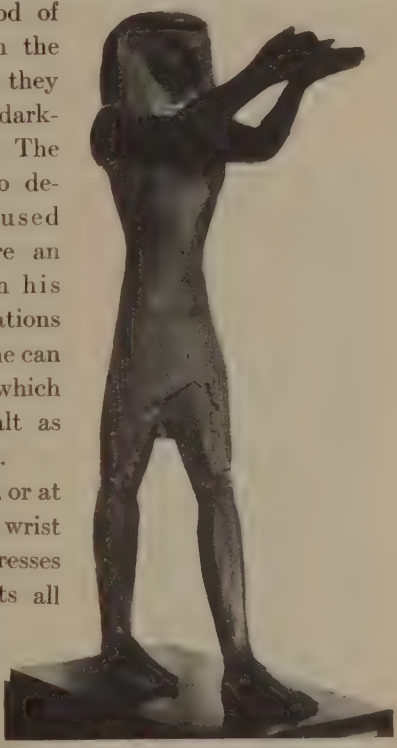
New Empire. Spoons for rouge (*Louvre*).

Before it was an art, sculpture was a science, and no sculptor can produce durable work if he has not found the generating elements of it in Nature herself. Now it was the Egyptians who taught us that, and it is

perhaps not possible to understand and to love sculpture if one has not first undergone the severe education they afford us.

The head of their statues remains a portrait, to which style is given by the subordination of its characteristics to a few decisive planes, but the body is molded in a canon of architectural science which will not be reached again. One foot is in front of the other or beside it; the statue, almost always crowned with the pschent, is half nude, standing with the arms glued to the sides or seated, the elbows at the thorax, the hands on the knees, the face looking straight ahead, the eyes fixed. It is forbidden to open its lips, forbidden to make a gesture, forbidden to turn its head, to arise, to leave its pedestal in order to mingle with living beings. One would say that it was tied down with bands. But yet it bears within it, in its visage, where thought wanders with the light, and in its immobilized body, the whole life spread out on the walls of the tombs, the bursting life of the shadows. A wave runs through it, a subterranean wave, whose sound is stifled. The statue's profiles have the sureness of an equation of stone and a sentiment so vast that everything of which we are in ignorance seems to reside in it silently. It will never tell its secret. The priest has enchained its arms and its legs, sewn up its mouth with mystic formulas. Egypt will not attain the philosophic equilibrium—that sense of the relative which gives us the sense of the measure of our action and, in revealing to us our true relationships with things in their ensemble, assigns

to us, in the harmony of the universe, the role of conscious center of the order which it imposes on us. She will not know the freedom toward which she was tending in the period of Memphis, and which the painters suspect as they grope about in the darkness of the tombs. The priest forbids her to demand of the confused movement of nature an agreement between his science and the aspirations of sentiment which she can not repress and which shine from the basalt as from an arrested sun.



Saite Epoch. Horus, bronze (*Louvre*).

Master of the soul, or at least holding by the wrist the hand that expresses it, the priest permits all things to the king, who permits all things to the priest. From the beginning of the Middle Empire to the end of the New, Egypt returns to the spirit that erected the pyramids. She will cover herself with giant temples and with colossuses, Ibsamboul, Luxor, Karnak, Ramesseum, Memnon, piles of stone, walls, pylons,

statues of disproportionate size, sphinxes, mill wheels of stone under which the king in his pride grinds the multitude which, in turn, is consoled by its pride in making gods. At this moment everything is possible to the sculptor-geometer. One does not know whether he cuts the rocks into colossuses or whether he gives to the colossuses the appearance of rocks. He penetrates into hills of granite, scoops out immense halls there, covers them from top to bottom with immense bas-reliefs and painted hieroglyphs, gives their front which faces the Nile the aspect of giant figures as decisive as the first profiles he traced—figures whose great pure faces stare, for three or four thousand years without the turn of an eyelid, at the terrible sun, which sculptures them with absolute shadows and lights. The monsters he erects as the borders of avenues, the monsters which tell nothing and reveal everything, are rigorously logical, despite their man's or ram's head on a lion's body. That head is attached naturally to the shoulders, the muscles barely indicated have their normal insertions and direction, the bones their necessary architecture, and from the tips of the claws and the silent planes of the sides, from the rump and the back to the round cranium and to the meditative face, the vital forces circulate with one continuous flow. When the artist cuts straight from the block these absolute forms whose surfaces seem determined by geometrical volumes penetrating one another according to immutable laws of attraction, one would say that he retains, in the depth of his inexhaustible instinct, the remembrance of the common form from

which all others come: animal forms, and, beyond the animal forms, those of the original sphere whence the planets issued and whose curve was sculptured by the gravitation of the heavens. The artist has the right to create monsters if he can make of them beings which can conceivably live. Any form adapted to the universal conditions of life is more living, even if it exists only in our imagination, than a form based on reality but fulfilling its function badly. The dried-out cadavers, which the soil of Egypt will finally absorb bit by bit, have not the reality of her sphinxes and her fearful gods with men's bodies and the head of hawks and panthers, where the spirit has laid its spark. In all directions and from whatever point one considers them, they undulate like a wave. One would say that an insensible line of light turns about them, slowly caresses an invisible form which its embrace reveals, itself searching out the place—without the intervention of the sculptor—where it is to be inflected or where it is to insinuate itself, barely to modulate the undulating

SAITE EPOCH (670 B.C.). Doll, wood (*British Museum*).

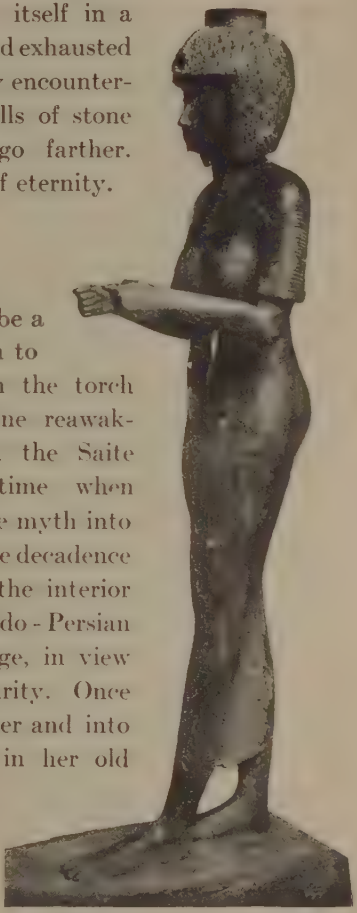
progression of the sculpture by imperceptible passages, as music does.

But this definitive science will eventually destroy the statue maker's art. An hour arrives when the mind, directed along a single road, can discover nothing more there. Doubtless the immobility of Egypt had never been more than an appearance. But the ideal of her mind, even if she tried to define herself in new forms, changed but little, for the teachings of her soil scarcely varied and it was always with the same surroundings that man had to reckon. And she had expended a prolonged effort to approach that ideal. It was for this reason that she had not died. She struggled. But the Theban empire was immobile. The dogma no longer moved; the social order had been poured into its granite mold which the monarchy sealed. Enthusiasm wears itself out if it recommences the same conquests every day. Under the Ramessides, the overstrained effort of the preceding dynasties was disunited. Continual war with outside powers, invasions, and foreign influences discouraged and unsettled the spirit of the Egyptians. After fifteen centuries of uninterrupted production, the Theban statue maker handled his material with too great facility. Occultism was, however, cultivated as much by the priestly classes and was thus the master that directed the artisan. But he had lost the power of action. He had lost that prodigious sense of mass that concentrates life in a decisive form of which all the surfaces seem to rejoin the infinite through their unlimited curves. Each year he delivered by hundreds

statues manufactured in quantity from the same commercial model. The school was formed. Geometrical idealism had fixed itself in a formula and sentiment had exhausted itself through continually encountering those unscalable walls of stone which forbade it to go farther. Egypt died of her need of eternity.

V

But her death was to be a slow one. She was even to have, before passing on the torch to younger hands, a fine reawakening to action. With the Saite dynasty, about the time when Greece emerged from the myth into history, she profited by the decadence of Assyria and that of the interior organization of the Medo-Persian power, to recover courage, in view of her re-established security. Once more she looked about her and into herself, and discovered in her old soul—infused with freshness by the confused presentiment of a new ideal—a supreme flower, as warm as an autumn. She cradled



Saite Epoch. Queen Karomana, bronze statuette (*Louvre*).

nascent Greece with a farewell song, still quite virile, and very gentle.

Saite art returned to original sources. It was as direct as the ancient Memphite art. But it has almost rediscovered the science of Thebes, and if it seems softer than Theban art, it is because its tenderness is more active. Now, we no longer find only funerary statues. Saite art escapes the formula; it produces faithful portraits, precise and nervous—scribes again, statuettes of women, personages seated on the ground, their hands crossed on their knees, at the height of the chin.

Egypt did not fail to obey that consoling law which decrees that every society about to die from exhaustion or which feels itself dragged into the current of revolution, shall turn back for a moment to address a melancholy farewell to woman, to her indestructible power which society, in the course of its vigorous youth, has usually misunderstood. Societies rising in full flight are too idealistic, too much concerned with the conquest and the assimilation of the universe, to look in the direction of the hearth they are abandoning. It is only on the other slope of life that they look backward to bow their wiser or more discouraged enthusiasm before the force that conserves while everything around it wearies, droops and dies—beliefs, illusions which are presentiments, and civilizing energy. Egypt at her decline caressed the body of woman with that sort of chaste passion which only Greece knew afterward, and which Greece perhaps did not express so religiously. Feminine forms, sheathed in

SAITE EPOCH (VI Century B.C.). Seated personage, bronze (*Louvre*).

a clinging material, have that pure lyrism of young plants that reach up to drink the daylight. The silent passage from the slim round arms to the shoulders, to the ripening breast, to the waist, to the belly, to the long, tapering legs, and to the narrow, bare feet has the freshness and the quivering firmness of flowers not

Ptolemaic Empire (I Century B.C.). Temple of Denderah.

yet opened. The caress of the chisel passes and slips over the forms like lips brushing a closed corolla which they would not dare to press. Man, grown tender, gives himself to her whom till then he had thought only to take.

In these last works Egypt confides to us her most intimate thought about the young women and the men seated like the boundary marks of roads. Everything is a restrained caress, a veiled desire to penetrate universal life before Egypt abandoned herself unresistingly to its current. As a musician hears harmony, the sculptor sees the fluid of light and shade that makes

the continuous world by passing from one form to another. Discreetly he joins the projections that are barely indicated by the long, rhythmic planes of the thin garment which has not a single fold. The model-

Ptolemaic Empire (1 Century B.C.). Temple of Denderah, bas-relief.

ing passes like water, over the most compact materials. Its wave flows between the absolute lines of a geometry in movement, it has the balanced undulations that one would call eternal, like the movement of the sea. Space continues the block of basalt or of bronze by taking up from its surface the confused illumination that arises from its depths. The mind of dying Egypt tries to gather together the general

energy dispersed through the universe, that it may transmit it to men to come.

And that is all. The walls of stone that inclosed the soul of Egypt are broken by invasion, which recommences and finds her at the end of her strength. Her whole inner life runs out of the open wound. Cambyses may overturn her colossuses; Egypt cannot offer a virile protest; her revolts are only on the surface and accentuate her decline. When the Macedonian comes, she willingly includes him among her gods, and the oracle of Ammon finds it easy to promise him victory. In the brilliant Alexandrian epoch her personal effort was practically *nil*. It was the Greek sages and the apostles of Judea who came to drink at her spring, now almost dried up, but still full of deep mirages, that they might try, in the unsettled world, to forge from the debris of the old religions and the old sciences a new weapon for the idea. She saw, with an indifferent eye, the dilettante from Hellas visiting and describing her monuments, and the Roman parvenu raising them again. She let the sand mount up around the temples, the mud fill the canals and bury the dikes, and the weariness of life slowly covered up her heart. She did not disclose the true depth of her soul. She had lived inclosed, she remained inclosed, shut like her coffins, her temples, her kings, a hundred cubits high, whom she seated in her oasis, above the motionless wheat, their foreheads in the solitude of the heavens. Their hands have never left their knees. They refuse to speak. One must consider them profoundly and seek in the depth

of oneself the echo of their mute confidences. Then their somnolence is awakened confusedly. . . . The science of Egypt, its religion, its despair, and its need for eternity—that endless murmur of ten thousand monotonous years—the whole of it is contained in the sigh which the colossus of Memnon exhales at sunrise.

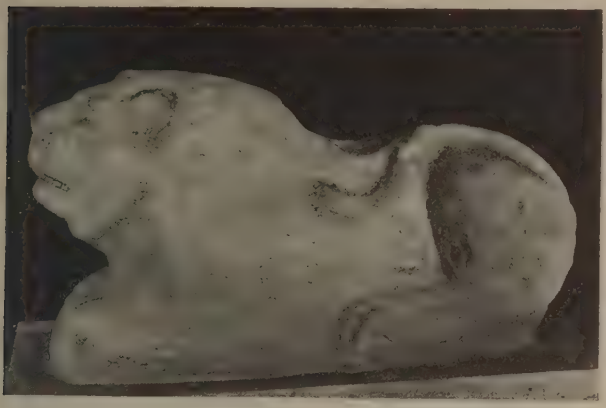
The Euphrates at Babylon

Chapter III. THE ANCIENT ORIENT

I

HERE, between the two old rivers which empty into the burning sea after crossing the solitudes, there is no longer anything more than formless hillocks, choked canals, and a few poor villages. The sand has covered up everything. Doubtless it is not much deeper above the Chaldean palaces which have disappeared than around the temples of the Nile which are still visible at its surface; and the Greeks must have exaggerated when they assigned two hundred thousand years of antiquity to Babylonian civilization. But the material of the walls was less hard and their abandonment by men more complete. And what, then, does it matter? The true cradle of the human soul is wherever we can recognize the face of our earliest aspiration.

And yet how mobile this face is! There it glows with the light of an undying hearth of contemplative aspirations, here we see concentrated the rigorous will to attain the visible and practical purpose and not to



CHALDEA (XXX Century B.C.?). Lion (*Louvre*).

go beyond it. The statues, which the dunes covered in the ruins of Tello, bear witness to a mind infinitely more positive, if not more sure of itself, than ever the Egyptian mind was, even at the time of the "Seated Scribe," their contemporary by a margin of a few centuries; and in the old Orient centuries count no more than years. Egypt had probably built the Pyramids by then, and had given the Sphinx's visage to a rock; the next age was to plunge her still deeper into mystery and turn her gaze inward more and more. The statues of Tello are neither gods nor symbols; they have nothing mysterious about them but their

antiquity and that silence which haunts the old stones found amid the relics of life beneath the ground. Here is the image of a builder-prince, a rule across his knees. As in Egypt, it is true, these decapitated bodies are stiff; rigid planes cut them into rectangular figures, and the limbs remain at rest; but the shoulders have

CHALDEA. Archaic figures (*British Museum*).

a terrible squareness, and the hands, instead of reposing on the thighs in the abandon of thought, are joined and strongly clasped, as if to indicate the articulation of the bones, the moving relief of the muscles, the folds and the rough grain of the skin. Two heads found near them have the same energy. One would think they were natural rocks that had been rolled by the waters, such is their compactness, their coherence, their sustained roundness.

In facial feature primitive Mesopotamia was, however, the sister of the plain of the Nile. The Tigris

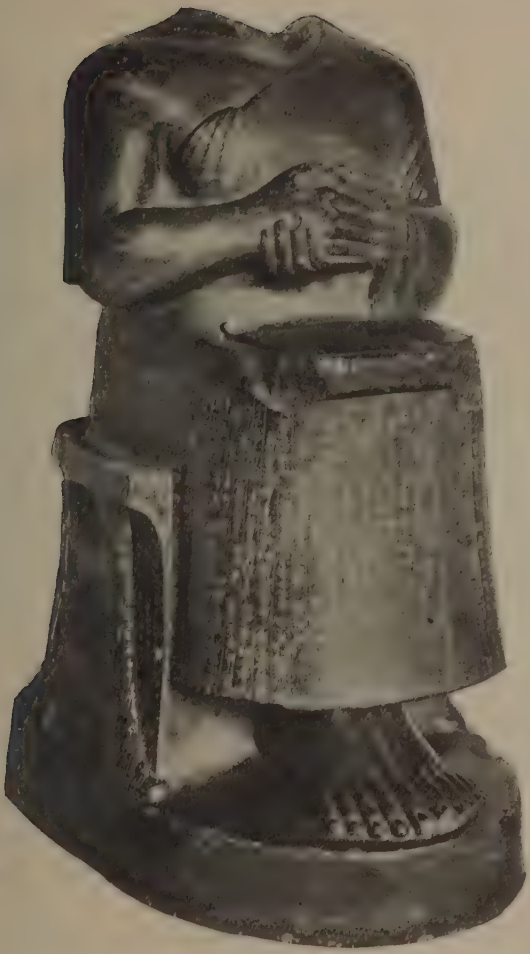
and the Euphrates, whose alluvial deposits nourish Mesopotamia, penetrate the country through hundreds of canals which cross one another around the cultivated fields. Covered with palm trees and date trees,

CHALDEA (XXX Century B.C.?). Palace of Tello, head, stone (*Louvre*).

with fields of wheat and barley, always at its harvest time, always at its seed time, Mesopotamia was the Eden of the Biblical legends, the granary of western Asia, to which its caravans and its rivers brought fruits and bread. By way of the Persian Gulf it launched its fleets on the sea. But renewing its strength from the tribes which descended from the high plateaus,

communicating by its rivers connected with the oceans of the south, with Armenia and with Syria which bounds the European Sea, surrounded by more advanced and more accessible peoples, it remained less shut in than Egypt, and did not, like the latter, consume itself at its own flame. To the east it made fecund the Medo-Persian Empires, and through them penetrated into India and even into China. To the north it extended itself through Assyria until the dawn of the modern civilizations. To the west it awakened Phœnicia, which opened the route from Mesopotamia to the valley of the Nile and to the world of the archipelago.

Finally, the Chaldean theocracy probably adhered more closely to primitive instincts than the priestly caste did that governed the people of the Nile. It was in Chaldea that astronomy was born, to which her engineers of hydraulics and her architects added the unerring instruments of geometry and mechanics. It was during her brilliant nights, when the earth prolongs its glow, which is due to the cloudless sky and the flatness of the land, that the shepherds of the earliest times, as well as those who came later to seek the coolness of the upper terraces, had observed in the clear sky the turning of the constellations. The positivistic education of the Egyptians aimed at more material needs and, because of this, left untouched the source of the great moral intuitions to which the people turned for a consolation, and which the Chaldean people, less harshly governed, interpreted in terms of navigation and trade, while the king-priests



CHALDEA (XXX Century B.C.?). Statue of Goudea (*Louvre*).

of Babylon interpreted it in the higher serenity which comes with the contemplation of the movements of the heavenly bodies.

Before the time of those powerful statues, which seem to foretell the end of this people's evolution and which are certainly the final flower of a culture centuries old, Chaldean art is almost an entire mystery. Its baked clay, less hard than the granite of the valley of the Nile or the marble of Pentelicus, has turned to dust; nothing is left but some sunken foundations. Only stone, which is scarce in Mesopotamia, can resist under the tide of earth that gnaws and corrodes like water and ends by reclaiming everything. From Assyro-Chaldean positivism to Egyptian idealism we find the distance which separates the consistency of baked clay from that of granite. Between the soil of the country and the intelligence of men, there

Assyria (ix Century B.C.). Genius with the head of an eagle, bas-relief (*Louvre*).

have always been such close analogies which we find are logical and necessary as soon as we understand that the mind invents nothing—discovers everything. We see, therefore, that a material which endures ought to give it the idea of permanence, and that a material

Assyria (viii Century B.C.). Decoration of a door of Nimrod, bas-relief (*Louvre*).

which crumbles should give it the idea of fragility and of the practical utilization of the instruments it can furnish. Thus, also, a sky whose mathematical revolutions have been scrutinized gives the idea of consecrating the precise means which it offers for mapping it out.

And so has disappeared the very skeleton of those monstrous cities which sheltered the most active peoples of the ancient world, and the most practical,

in the modern sense of the word. Where Babylon rose there is nothing but palm groves on some vestiges of city walls, around which the sand heaps up. None the less, on the two banks of the Euphrates, Babylon encircled its multitudes in a belt of walls twenty-five leagues in length, ninety feet in thickness, bristling with two hundred and fifty towers and studded with gates of bronze. Built of bricks and bitumen, with its city walls, palaces, temples, houses, street pavements, the banks of its canals, its reservoirs, the bridges and quays of the river—uniform, dull, and reddish in color, here and there touched with enamel, the city of Semiramis lifted toward the heavens its monotonous buildings, almost solid blocks with gardens on their terraces, thus resembling the Iranian foothills, which are bare as far up as the cool plateaus, where forests and flowers grow. Above these artificial woods were towers, made up of stages built one upon the other. The plains call for gigantic constructions from which they can be surveyed from afar and commanded, and which shall be infinite like themselves. The tower of Babel was never to be finished and, as if to explore the ocean of the stars from nearer by, the temple of Baal rose to a height of two hundred meters.

The tower of Babel is now a formless hill which the desert is absorbing little by little. Apart from the seals of hard stone which continued to be produced during the whole civilization of Nineveh, there is perhaps no longer much that is solid under the sand, and it is possible that Chaldea has nothing more to

reveal to us. The sand still gives up, at times, one of those cuneiform inscriptions which are the most ancient writing known, and by which the Chaldeans

Assyria (viii Century B.C.). King fighting, bas-relief (*British Museum*).

wrote their legal documents, their acts of purchase and of sale, the great events of their history, the recital of the deluge—history and legend intermingled. The few bas-reliefs of Tello must have been an exception in the industry of the time. The desert is too bare to inspire in man the desire for multiple forms and luxuriant decoration. It needs, rather, the outer life of the Assyrians with their wars and hunts, to bring about a more prolonged contact with living forms. But it brings about nothing which is not strongly indicated in the bas-relief of Tello, where vultures

carry off in their claws and tear with their beaks strips of human bodies, and in the dense black statues with prominent muscles.

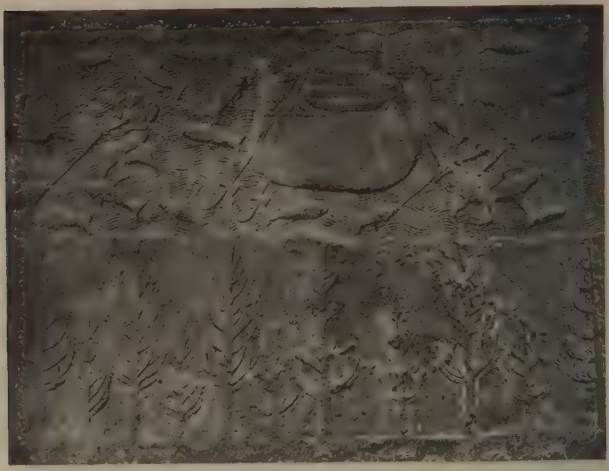
II

The art of northern Mesopotamia inherits from Babylonian art just as Ninevite civilization did from Chaldean society. The language which its artists speak is about the same, for the soil, the sky, and the men are not very different. Only, with the transformation of the social order and the conditions of life, Chaldean positivism has become brutality. The priest-savant has given place to the military chief, who has usurped to his profit and that of his class the temporary command which his companions in hunting and in battle intrusted to him. The king, in Assyria, is no longer, as in Egypt, the figurehead and instrument of the priest; he is the Sar, the temporal and spiritual chief, obeyed under pain of death. The Assyrian astronomer knows Chaldean science, to be sure, but his role is limited to compelling the heavenly bodies to voice the desires and interests of his master. Chaldean star worship, an essentially naturalistic and positivistic religion, has been transformed with the social state. The symbols have been personified just as political power was; the sun, the planets, and fire are now real beings—terrible devourers of men, and the Sar is their armed hand.

This Sar is saturated with hereditary vices, deformed, before he comes to reign, by an autocracy centuries old. He is developed in a frightful solitude by a

Assyria (viii Century B.C.). Officer, bas-relief (*Louvre*).

world of women, of eunuchs, of slaves, officers, and ministers. Luxury and the weight of material life have crushed his heart. He is a sadistic beast. He is enervated with ennui, with indulgence and music,



Assyria (viii Century B.C.). The fisherman, bas-relief (*British Museum*).

with the smells of slaughter and of flowers. Men are burned or boiled for his gratification; he is shown living flesh which is being torn by the whip or cut by iron, and in which poison is producing lockjaw. His least impulse is expressed by an order to kill. On the bas-reliefs of Khorsabad and Koujoundjik, we may see him methodically putting out the eyes of chained prisoners; we may see his soldiers bowling with decapitated heads. Sennacherib, Sargon, or Assurbanipal orders his scribes to write on brick:

"My war chariots crush men and beasts and the bodies of my enemies. The monuments which I erect are made of human corpses from which I have cut the heads and the limbs. I cut off the hands of all those whom I capture alive."

Suffering exists in proportion to sensibility. It is

Assyria (viii Century B.C.). Lioness resting, bas-relief (*British Museum*).

possible that the Assyrian people did not feel the horror of living, since they never felt its real joy as did the Egyptian crowds, which confided to the granite of the tombs the sweetness and poetry of their soul. Killing is an intoxication. By dint of seeing blood flow, by dint of expecting death, one grows to love blood, and everything that one does in life smells of death. Massacre always; battles, and the military tide rising or ebbing to carry devastation round about Nineveh or to turn it back upon the surrounding

peoples. Always the swarming of the nameless masses in putrefaction and misery, in the poisonous vapors of the waters and the devouring fire of the heavens.

When this people is not cutting throats or burning buildings, when it is not decimated by famine and butchery, it has only one function—to build and decorate palaces whose vertical walls shall be thick enough to protect the Sar, his wives, his guards, and his slaves—twenty or thirty thousand persons—against the sun, invasion, or perhaps revolt. Around the great central courts are the apartments covered with terraces or with domes, with cupolas, images of the absolute vault of the deserts, which the Oriental soul will rediscover when Islam shall have reawakened it. Higher than these, observatories which are at the same time temples, the *zigurats*, the pyramidal towers whose stages painted with red, white, blue, brown, black, silver, and gold, shine afar through the veils of dust which the winds whirl in spirals. Especially at the approach of evening, the warring hordes and the nomadic pillagers, who see the somber confines of the desert streaked with this motionless lightning, must recoil in fear. It is the dwelling of the god, and resembles those steps of the plateau of Iran leading to the roof of the world, which are striped with violent colors by subterranean fire and by the blaze of the sun.

The gates are guarded by terrific brutes, bulls and lions with human heads, marching with a heavy step. On the whole length of the interminable walls they herald the drama which unrolls within—the mytho-

logical and living hell, the slaughter of men in war, the men falling from the tops of towers into the shower of stones and spears, kings choking lions, the bloody epic whose cruelty is increased by its mechanical expression. These stiff legs in profile, those torsos

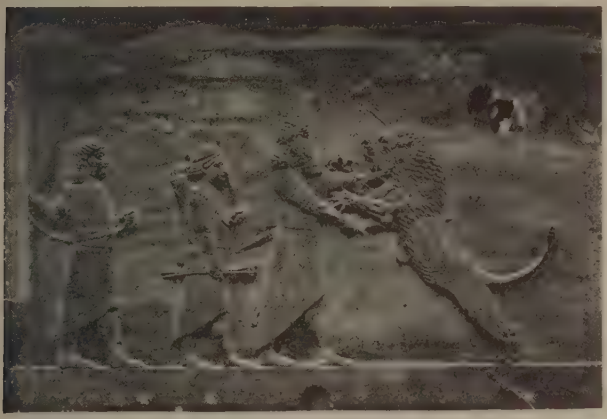
Assyrian Art (viii Century B.C.). Basket, model in stone (*British Museum*).

seen in profile or front view, these arms articulated like pincers—all are resisting, some killing, some dying. And if this life thus formed never attains that silent rhythm which, in Egypt, communicates to it a character of such high spirituality, it gives the ferocious bas-reliefs of the palaces of Nineveh a force so rigorous as to seem to pursue its demonstration by its own impetus.

It is by this burst of life, arrested in a few attitudes —conventional but passionately alive—that all archa-

isms correspond one with another. Certain writers have tried, by a too easy process of reasoning, to associate the ancient forms of art with the attempts of children. The Egyptians and the Assyrians are supposed to have traced mere sketches of a superior figure, which was to be realized by the Greeks. As in the images made by children, it is true, the eye is seen in front view and very wide, illuminating a face in profile. It is true that the Theban or Ninevite artist satisfied the need for continuity, which the child also shares with all beings and which is the very condition of his logical development; he did so in following—untiringly and willingly—the uninterrupted line of the contours, the definition of the eye by the edge of the lids, and the profile of the face, whose plane flees and floats as soon as it is presented in front view. But it is only in decorative bas-relief or in painting—the language of convention—that Egypt and Assyria reveal this inadequacy of technique—which, however, takes away nothing from the force of the sentiment and leaves intact the incomparable conception of mass and of evocative line. Assyrian art and Egyptian art represent a synthetic effort whose profundity and whose power of intuition are such that it is puerile to think childhood capable of anything similar. And when the Egyptian turns to his true means of expression—sculpture—he reveals in it a science which will never again contain so much ardor and mystery, even if the social and moral preoccupations of other peoples animate it with a different life, indeed a freer and more comprehensive life. The art of the old peoples

develops itself within itself; it accepts the fixed limits of the great metaphysical systems and thus is prevented from expressing the multiple and infinitely complex relationships between the being in movement and the world in movement. Only political and



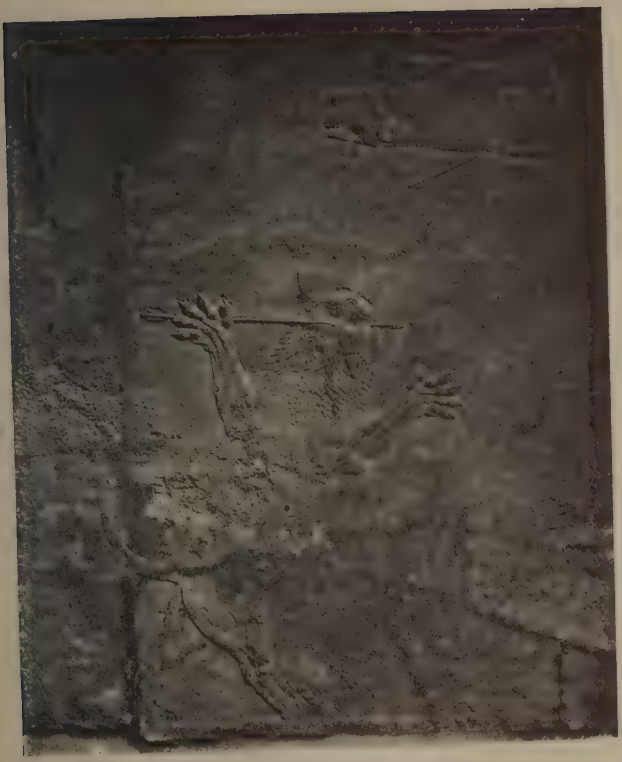
Assyria (viii Century B.C.) The lion hunt, bas-relief (*British Museum*).

religious liberty will break the archaic mold, to reveal to man, who is already defined in his structure, his place in the universe.

Assyrian society was particularly far removed from such preoccupations. It was interested only in adventures of war or of hunting in which the Sar was the hero. The walls of his palace declare his glory and his strength. No desire to better life, no moving tenderness. When they did not celebrate a killing they showed a line of soldiers on the march to a killing.

When the Assyrians left their burning soil to go down to the sea they saw nothing but the effort of the rowers, they leaned over the waves only to see fish seized by crabs. There was nothing like this in Egypt, which again and again took refuge in that concentration of mind which gives a quality of inner life and a mystery to its art. There is nothing like this even in Chaldea, where we find feminine bodies outlined in a furtive caress. Amid the incessant wars, the invasions, ruins, and griefs, the artist had not the time to look within him. He served his master, and without mental reservations. He followed him in his military expeditions against Chaldea, against Egypt, against the Hittites, and the tribes of the high plateaus. In his train he hunts the onager in the plains, or goes with him to seek the lion in the caverns of the Zagros Mountains. He leads a violent life, full of movement, and not at all contemplative. He recounts it with brutality.

Assyrian art is of a terrible simplicity. Although an almost flat silhouette, one that is barely shadowed by undulations, alone marks out the form—that form is bursting with life, movement, force, savage character. One might say that the sculptor ran a knife over the course of the nerves which carry the murderous energy to the back, the limbs, and the jaws. The bones and muscles stretch the skin to the breaking point. Hands clutch paws, close upon necks, and draw the bowstring; teeth tear, claws rend; the blood spouts thick and black. Only the human face is without movement. Never does one see its surface light up with the dull

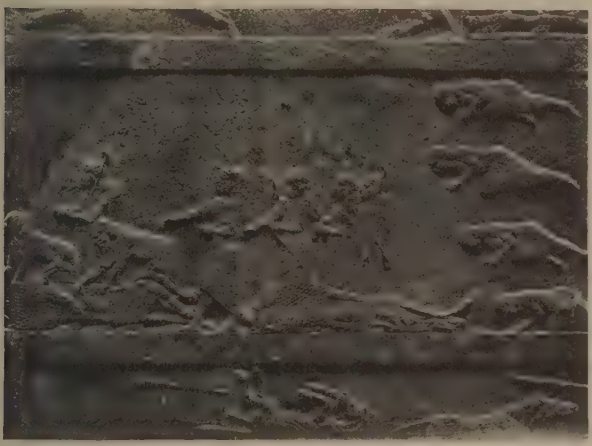


Assyria (viii Century B.C.). Wild beasts wounded and dead, bas-relief (*British Museum*).

glow of the Egyptian faces. It is altogether exterior, always the same—hard, closed, very monotonous, but very much characterized by its immense eyes, its arched nose, its thick mouth, its dead and cruel ensemble. It is meet that the king, whose head retains its tiara and its oiled, perfumed, and curled hair and beard, should be calm as he strangles or cuts the throat of the monster, drunk with fury. It is meet that the details of his costume, as well as those of his hairdressing, should be minutely described. The poor artist has to concern himself with pitiful things. He flatters his master, ornaments his garments, and cares for his weapons and war equipment; he makes his hair glossy; he represents him as being impassible and strong in combat, larger than those who accompany him, dominating without effort the furious beast which he kills. The terrible character of the breasts, the legs, the arms in action, the wild animals rushing to the attack with muscles tense, bones cracking, or jaws grinding, is too often masked by the artist.

What matter? At that time when a man could not free himself he had to assume his share of the servitude. The Ninevite artist comprehended—that is, the one really accessible liberty. He was infinitely stronger than those whose horrible power he had the weakness to adore. The too elegant, the too courageous Sars with their royal ornaments and their trappings, bore us, and that is the revenge of the sculptor. What he loved seizes us—overpowers us. Ask him how he saw the animals: lean horses with thin legs, nervous, drawn heads, with throbbing nostrils; ask

him to show you the growling dogs as they pull at their chains, or the bristling lions, or the great birds run through by arrows and falling among the trees. There he is incomparable, superior to all before and after him, Egyptians, Ægeans, Greeks, Hindoos, Chinese, Japanese, the Gothic image makers, and the



Assyria (viii Century B.C.). The trophies of the hunt, bas-relief (*British Museum*).

men of the Renaissance in France or in Italy. Under the palm trees with their rough-skinned fruits he has surprised the beast at rest, its muzzle resting on its paws as it digests the blood it has drunk. He has seen the beast in combat, tearing flesh, opening bellies, mad with hunger and rage. The forces of instinct circulate with blind violence in these contracted muscles, these beasts falling heavily on the prey, these

bodies raised upright, with limbs apart and open claws, in these wrinkling muzzles, these irresistible springs, and these death struggles as ferocious as leaps or victories. Never will uncompromising description go farther. Here a lion vomits blood because his lungs are run through by a spear. There a lioness in fury, her teeth and claws out, drags toward the hunter her body paralyzed by the arrows that have pierced the marrow of her spine. They are still terrible when dead, lying on their backs, with their great paws falling idly. It is the poem of strength, of murder, and of hunger.

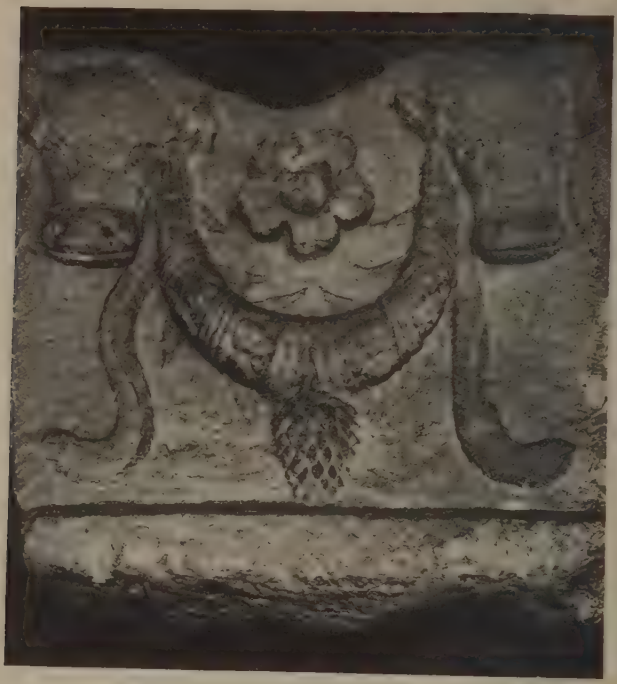
Even when he puts aside for a day his subjects of battle or the chase, his orgies of murder in the horrible chorus of death clamors and roars, the Assyrian sculptor continues his poem. Almost as well as the sphinxes of the sacred alleys of Egypt, the violent monsters who guard the gates give that impression of animal unity which makes the strangest creations of our imagination re-enter the order of nature. But the statue maker of Nineveh is not content with fixing an eagle's head on the shoulders of a man, a man's head on the neck of a bull. The bull, the lion, the eagle, and the man are merged; we get the body or claws of a lion, the hoofs or breast of a bull, the wings or claws of an eagle, the hard head of a man, with his long hair, beard, and high tiara. Man and lion, eagle and bull, the being has always the potentiality of life; in its brutal and tense harmony it fulfills its symbolic function, and its violent synthesis of the natural forms represents to our eyes the power of

the armed animal. As in Egypt, the head of the monster is generally human—an obscure and magnificent homage rendered by the man of violence to the law which man bears essentially within him, the law which says that blind force is to be overcome by the force of the mind.

III

On the horizon of the ancient world this disciplined force was rising slowly. The peoples who received from Assyria the heritage of our conquests and who already had taken over from Iranian husbandry its cult of bread and the plow, the worship of fire, the central force of civilized life, the first philosophic notions of good and evil, which Ormuzd and Ahriman personified the people of the mountains of the East were entering history with an ideal less harsh. Masters of the high plateaus, the Medes, after long struggles, had overturned the empire of the rivers, to spread over Asia Minor. Then Cyrus had given the hegemony to the Persians, and soon all western Asia, from the Persian Gulf to the Euxine Sea, Syria, Egypt, Cyrenaica, Cyprus, and the banks of the Indus obeyed his successors. Only the breasts of the Greeks could stop the wave at Marathon. But this incessant binding together of men and ideas had done its work. If the armies of the King of Kings remained subject to the frightful discipline which they inherited from the Sars of Assyria, political Persia at least left to the countries it had just conquered the liberty to live about as they pleased. The enormous Medo-Persian

Empire became a kind of federal monarchy whose component states, under the direction of the satraps, kept their customs and their laws. The atmosphere



PHŒNICIAN ART. Frieze (*Louvre*).

of the Oriental world became more tolerable, as was the case in the Occident when Rome had conquered it entirely. Men cultivated their fields and exchanged their merchandise and ideas in comparative peace. The attempt at a first synthesis, even, was about to be made among the peoples of the Levant.

That attempt would hardly produce a final result either in Egypt or in Greece. Egypt, fatigued by forty or sixty centuries of effort, was being swallowed up under the deposits of the river. Greece was too

Hispano-Phœnician Art (v Century B.C.).
Head from Elche (*Louvre*).

young and too much alive not to extract a personal ideal of victory from all the elements that the ancient world intrusted to her. As to the people of Syria, they had already failed in various attempts which they had made. The Phœnicians lived only for trade. They were forever on the sea, or on the search for unknown coasts, possessed with a fever for wandering

which was fed by their mercantile nature. Mingling with the Mediterranean peoples whom they flooded with their products—textiles, vases, glassware, wrought metals, trinkets, statuettes hastily imitated from all the original nations for whom they were the agents and intermediaries—they had not the time to question their hearts. They were satisfied to serve as a means of exchange for the ideas of others and to bequeath to the world the alphabet, a positivist invention which the extent and complication of their commercial writings rendered necessary. Cyprus, the eternally servile, subjected to their influence, combined fallen Assyria with nascent Greece in heavy and doughlike forms wherein the force of the one and the intelligence of the other were reciprocally hurtful in the attempt to unite them. As to the Hittites, caught between the Egyptians and the Assyrians and pushed into northern Syria, they were never sufficiently masters of themselves to seek in the outer world any justification of their desire to cut stone into those rude bas-reliefs on which remains the moral imprint of the conqueror.

The Semites, through the gravity and the vigor of their history, might have had the ambition to pick up the instrument of human education which Assyria was letting fall—the more so since they had absorbed, by peaceful conquest, the populations of Mesopotamia, and since their race dominated from Iran to the sea. But their religion repudiated the cult of images. Their whole effort was employed in raising a single edifice, the house of a terrible and solitary god. And

that effort did not produce a final result. The Temple of Solomon was not worthy of that Jewish genius, so grandly synthetical, but closed and jealous, which

PERSIA. Palace of Persepolis.

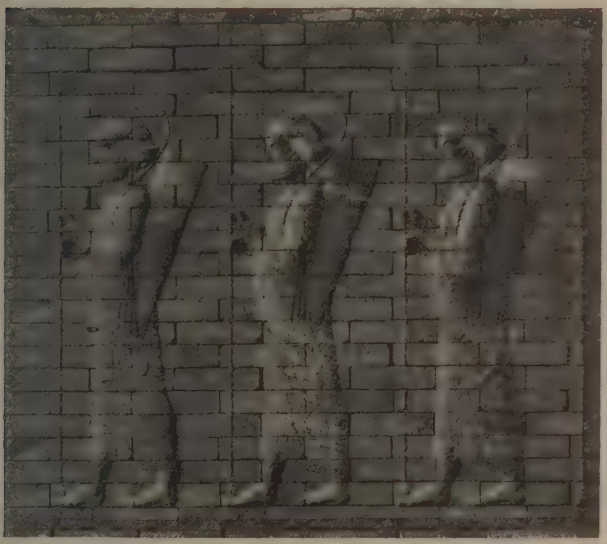
wrote the poem of Genesis, and whose voice of iron has traversed the ages.

Persia alone, mistress of the hearths of Oriental civilization, could—by concentrating for a final leap the weakening energies of the peoples she had conquered—attempt a résumé of the soul of antiquity, in the course of the two hundred years which separated her appearance in the world and the Macedonian conquest. Egypt, Assyria, and Greece—she assimilated the qualities of all. For two centuries she represented the Oriental spirit declining in face of the Occidental spirit which was issuing from the shadow.

She had even the exceptional destiny not to disappear entirely from history and to show to changing Europe —now very civilized, now very barbarous—a genius sufficiently supple to welcome, in their turn, the ideas of the Hellenic world, the Latin world, the Arab world, the world of the Hindoos and of the Tartars; and yet her genius was sufficiently independent to emancipate her from their material domination.

If we refer to the testimony of her most ancient monuments, of the period when she was trying to disengage a freer and less tense spirit from the force of Assyria, we perceive quickly that the archers of her processions are not so cruel, that the beasts whose throats are cut are not so fearful, that the monsters which guard the gates or support the architraves have a less brutal look. The hieratic spirit of conquered Egypt and especially the harmonious intelligence of the Ionians of the coasts and islands who were called in by Darius give to these feasts of death a character of decoration and pageantry which masks their ferocity. The genius of Greece, which was then ripening, could not endure an original form of art subsisting at its side. And as it could not prevent Persia from speaking, it denatured her words in translating them. It is not even necessary to see the Assyrian monsters before looking at the figures of Susa in order to realize that the latter have but little life, that they are heraldic in their silhouette and rather bombastic in style. The Sassanian kings, their prisoners, and the great military scenes cut in the rock at several places in the mountain chain which

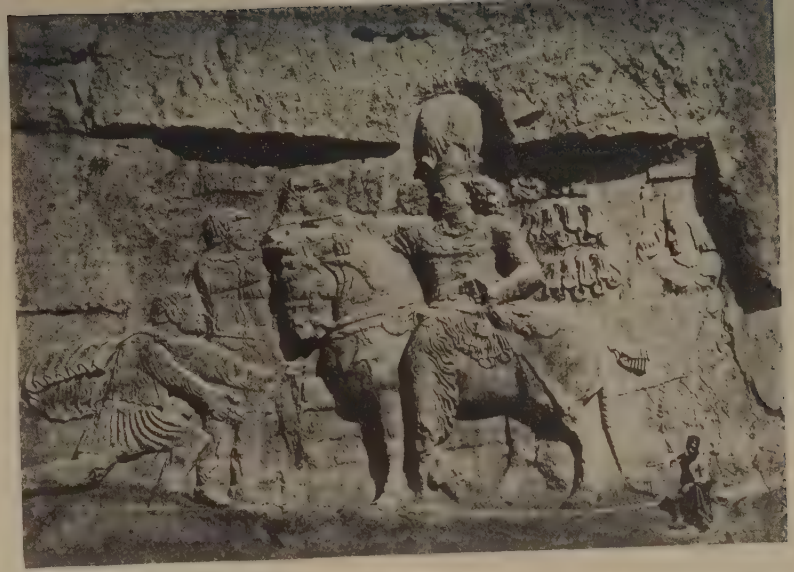
borders the Iranian plains and dominates the region of the rivers, have a far more grand and redoubtable appearance, despite the discernible evidence that Persia continued to borrow from the peoples with



PERSIA (VI Century B.C.). Frieze of the Archers at Susa (*Louvre*).

whom she fought—the Romans after the Greeks and Assyrians. Asia alone and Egypt have possessed the unshakable and gigantic faith that is needed to stamp the form of our sentiments and of our acts on these terrible natural walls against which the sun crushes men, or to spend three or four centuries in penetrating the bowels of the earth in order to deposit in its shade the seed of our mind.

Amid these sculptured mountains we find the ruins of the great terraced palaces to which giant staircases lead and for the building of which Ninevite architects had certainly come: and we are astonished that Greek genius, which in the same centuries was building its small and pure temples, could have made itself pliable to the point of marrying without effort its own grace and this brutal display of pomp and sensuality, before which the serenity of the Egyptian genius bowed ever as did the violence of the Assyrian genius. It was, however, Ionian Greece that gave the elegance and the upward thrust to the long columns of the porticos, as she also draped the archers and gave architectural style to the lions. It was Egypt that loaded their bases and necks with strong wreaths of plants—lotus and fat leaves that grow in the tepid water of the rivers. It was Assyria that crowned them with broad bulls affixed by the middle of the body to support the beams on which the entablature was to be placed. And the palaces of Nineveh seemed to have piled up here their chiseled furniture with its incrustation of gold, silver, and copper, their cloths heavy with precious stones and those thick deep carpets, changeable in color and shaded like the harvests of the earth, opulent and vague like the Oriental soul—the carpets which Persia had not ceased to manufacture. But the decoration of the royal dwellings of Persepolis and of Susa is less loaded, less barbarous and betokens a more refined industry and a mind that is humanizing. Enameled brick, with which the Assyrians, after the Chaldeans, had protected



PERSIA (III Century B.C.). Valerian in supplication before Sapor, sculptured rock of Nakche-Roustem, after Dieulafoy in *L'Art Antique de la Perse* (Librairie des Imprimeries Réunies).

their walls against humidity, is lavished from the top to the bottom of the edifice, on the exterior, under the porticos, and in the apartments. The palace of the Achemenides is no longer the impenetrable fortress of the Sars of the north. Still imposing by its rectangular heaviness, it is lightened by its columns, which have the freshness of stalks swelling with water; it is flowered with green, blue, and yellow, brilliant as lacquer in the sunlight, and reflecting the glow of the lamps. Enamel is the glory of the Orient. It is still enamel which reflects the burning days and the nights of tawny pearl in the cupolas and the minarets of the mysterious cities sunk under the black cypresses and the roses.

When Alexander reached the threshold of these palaces, dragging behind his war chariots all the old vanquished peoples, he was like the incarnate symbol of the ancient civilizations wandering in search of their dispersed energy. His dream of universal empire was to endure a shorter time than that of Cambyses and his successors. Union is to be realized only when willed by a common faith and when it tends toward one goal. Egypt, Chaldea, and Assyria, exhausted by their gigantic production, were nearing the end of their last winter. The Jews, in their inner solitude, were marching toward a horizon that no one perceived. Rome was too young to impose on the Orient, now grown old, that artificial harmony which, three centuries later, gave it the illusion of a halt in its lethargic death struggle. Greece, in her skepticism, smiled at her own image. Meanwhile, the

Macedonian was pretending to the position of armed apostle of her thought, and the whole ancient world was under her moral ascendancy. Despite all, in that immense floating mass of civilizing energies which hesitated about their departure for a more distant Occident, it was still Greece that represented, in the face of the confused reawakening of brutal and mystical powers, the young ideal of reason and liberty.

PERSIA (Sassanide). Silver cup (*Bibliotheque Nationale*).

MYCENÆ.

Chapter IV. THE SOURCES OF GREEK ART

I

N condition that we respect ruins, that we do not rebuild them, that, after having asked their secret, we let them be recovered by the ashes of the centuries, the bones of the dead, the rising mass of waste which once was vegetations and races, the eternal drapery of the foliage—their destiny may stir our emotion. It is through them that we touch the depths of our history, just as we are bound to the roots of life by the griefs and sufferings which have formed us. A ruin is painful to behold only for the man who is incapable of participating by his activity in the conquest of the present.

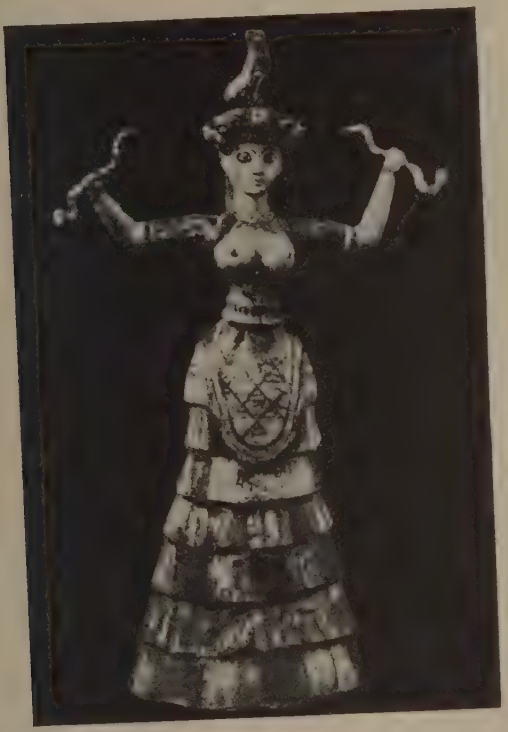
There is no more virile luxury than that of asking our past griefs how they were able to determine our present actions. There is no more virile luxury than that of demanding, from the imprints of those who prepared our present dwelling, the why of the thing

ÆGEAN PERIOD (XIX Century B.C.).
Phæstos, vase of the reapers, steatite
(*Museum of Candia*).

that we are. A statue coming all moist out of the earth, a rusted jewel, or a bit of pottery bearing the trace of painting is a witness which tells us much more about ourselves than about the bygone men who uttered this testimony. Art lives in the future. It is the fruit of the pain, desires, and hopes of the people, and the promise contained in these feelings does not reach its slow realization until later, in the new needs of the crowds; it is our emotion which tells us if the old presentiments of men did not deceive them.

If we are so troubled by the rude idols, the jewels,

he vases, the pieces of bas-reliefs, and the effaced paintings which we have found at Knossos in Crete, at Tirynth and Mycenæ in Argolis, it is precisely



CRETE (XV Century B.C.). The goddess with the serpents, faïence statuette (*Museum of Candia*).

because those who left them are more mysterious to us than the things themselves, and because it is comforting for us to realize, through these unknown beings,

that under the variation of appearances and the renewal of symbols, emotion and intelligence never change in quality. Through the continuing action, even when obscure and without history, of the generations which have formed us, the soul of the old peoples lives in ours. But they participate in our own adventure only if their silent spirit still animates the stone faces in which we recognize our eternally young desires, or if we hear the sound of their passage over the earth in the crumbling of the temples which they raised. Egypt, and Chaldea itself, through Assyria and Persia which prolong their life till our time, cast their shadow at our steps. They will never seem to us very far away. Primitive Greece, on the contrary, which does not enter the world until centuries after them, retreats much farther back in the imagination, to the very morning of history. Twenty years ago we did not know whether the almost effaced imprints, noted here and there on the shores and islands of the Ægean Sea, had belonged to men or to fabled shadows. It was necessary to hollow out the soil, to unearth the stones, and to cease from seeing only ourselves in them, in order to catch a glimpse of the phantom humanity which, before the time of history, peopled the eastern Mediterranean. Schliemann, who took Homer at his word, excavated in the plain off Argos from Tirynth to Mycenæ. Mr. Evans entered the labyrinth of Minos in Crete where Theseus killed the Minotaur. Myth and history entangle themselves. Now the symbol sums up a hundred events of the same order; now the real event, representative of a whole series

of customs, ideas, and adventures, seems to us to put on the garb of a symbolic fiction.[1]

Is it the body of Agamemnon that Schliemann found, buried in gold, under the Agora of Mycenæ, and is the Hissalrik of the Dardanelles the Troy of Homer? What matter? Between Abraham and Moses, in the time when Thebes dominated Egypt, the Ægean Sea was alive. The Phœnicians had advanced from island to island, awakening to the life of exchange the tribes of fishermen who peopled the Cyclades, Samos, Lesbos, Chios, Rhodes — the rocks sprinkled broadcast in the sparkling sea from the mountains of Crete and of the Peloponnesus to the gulfs of Asia Minor. Through them the sensual and cruel spirit of the Orient and the secret spirit of the peoples of the Nile had fertilized the waves. Danaos came from Egypt, Pelops from Asia, Cadmus from Phœnicia.

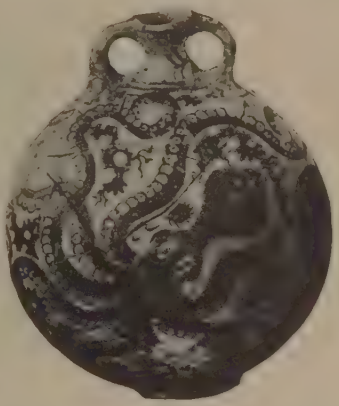
CRETE (XIV Century B.C.). Jar (*National Museum of Athens*).

[1] Victor Bérard, *Les Phéniciens et l'Odyssée.*

From fishing, coast trade, the small business of one isle with another, from rapine and piracy, a whole little moving world of sailors, merchants, and corsairs lived their healthy life, neither a rich nor a poor one—a mean one—if we think of the vast commercial enterprises and the great explorations which the Phœnicians undertook. Their feet in the water and their faces to the wind, the men of the Ægean would carry to the traffickers from Tyre and Sidon who had just entered the port, under blue, green, and red sails, their fish and their olives in vases painted with marine plants, octopuses, seaweed, and other forms taken from the teeming, viscous life of the deep. It needed centuries, doubtless, for the tribes of a single island or a single coast to recognize a chief, to consent to follow him afar on cunning and bloody expeditions to the cities of the continent, whence they brought back jewels, golden vessels, rich stuffs, and women. And it was only then that the Achaians and the Danai of the old poems heaped up those heavy

Mycenæ (xiii Century B.C.). Bull's head, silver (*National Museum, Athens*).

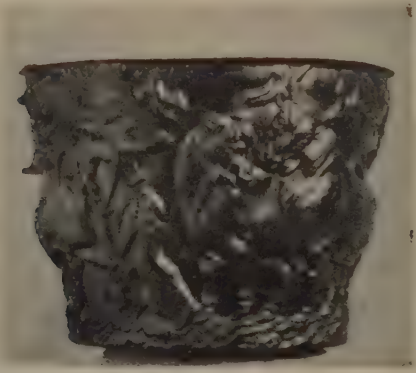
stones on the fortified promontories, the Cyclopean walls, the Pelasgic walls under the shadow of which the Atrides, crowned with gold like the barbarian kings who sallied forth from the forests of the north two thousand years later, sat at table before the meats and wines, with their friends and their soldiers.



Mycenæan Period (xiv-xiii Centuries B.C.). Vase of Palai-Kastro, clay (*Museum of Candia*).

Such origins could not but make them subtle and hard. Æschylus felt this when he came there, after eight centuries, to listen in the solitude to the echo of the death cries of the frightful family. These pirates selected sites for their lair near the sea—tragically consistent with their life of murder and the heavy orgies which followed upon their deeds of crime. A circle of hills—bare, devoured by fire and enlivened by no torrent, no tree, no bird cry. We find the life of these men depicted on the sides of the rudely chiseled vase of Vaphio, and on the strips of wall remaining beneath the ruins of Tirynth and of Knossos. There are bits of frescoes there as free as the flight of the sea birds; the art is of a terrible candor, but is already disintegrating. One sees women with bare breasts, rouge on their lips, black around the eyes, their flounced

dresses betraying the bad taste of the barbarian; they are painted and sophisticated dolls bought in the Orient or taken by force on the expeditions of violence. Here are bulls pursued in the olive groves, bulls gallop-



Mycenæan Period (xii Century B.C.). Vase of Vaphio, gold (*National Museum, Athens*).

ing, rearing, charging upon men or tangled in great nets. Sometimes there are reapers who laugh and sing with tremendous gayety among the sheaves of wheat which they carry, but usually we find the questionable woman, the wild beast, and the marine monster; a voluptuous and brutal life like that of every primitive man raised to a post of command by force or by chance. As guardians of the gates of their acropolis they set up stone lionesses with bronze heads, heavily erect. When they died these men were laid away in a shroud of gold leaf. . . .

It was a civilization already rotten, a Byzantium in

miniature, where dramas of the bedroom determined revolutions and massacres. It ended like the others. The Dorian descends from the north like an avalanche, rolls over Argolis and even to Crete, devastating the cities and razing the acropolises. Legendary Greece enters a thick darkness from which she would not have reappeared if the barbarians had not left, intact under the conflagration, such material testimony of her passage through history as the kings with the masks of gold. The Phœnicians desert the coast of the Peloponnesus, of Attica, and of Crete, and the native populations, dispersed like a city of bees on which a host of wasps has descended, swarm in every direction, on the shores of Asia, in Sicily, and in southern Italy. Silence reigns around continental Greece. It was to be two or three hundred years before the Phœnicians and the Achaians, driven away by the invasion, could get back the route to its gulfs.

II

The Dorians had no word to say during the Hellenic middle ages; nothing from Asia entered their land. The ancient continent was advancing step by step, by way of the islands, prudently regaining a little of the lost territory. Melos, in need of pottery, had to wait till the Ceramists of primitive Athens had manufactured at the Dipylon, those vases with the geometrical designs which were the first sign of the reawakening of civilized life in barbarous Greece. We are here witnessing a slow dramatic ascent in the shadows of

the soul, under this magnificent sky, at the center of this brilliant world. In order that the spark might kindle, it was necessary that the Dorian, the Phœnician, and the ancient Ægean who has become an Ionian, repair their broken relationships. Thereupon the flame mounted quicker to light up the virgin soil with the most dazzling focus of intelligence in history.

For this focus, the Homeric poems—echoes picked up from the annihilated world by the vanquished—and the radiant Greek myths which are elaborated confusedly along the deserted shores are the heralding dawnlights seen against this black background. The cradle of the Hellenic soul mounts with them on the chariot of the sun. In the evening, the Dorian herdsman bringing home his goats from the mountain and the Ionian sailor bringing home his bark from the sea would repeat to themselves glorious fables which carried over into images men's old intuitive notions of the phenomena of nature, or translated the struggle of their ancestors against the adverse forces of the ill-organized world. The enthusiastic naturism of the human soul in its freshness gave to its young science a robe of light, of clouds, of leaves, and of waters. The whole religion, the philosophy, the austere and charming soul of the builders of the Parthenons are in this anonymous and tangled poem which rises with the murmur of a dawn as Greece reawakens to life.

The "Greek miracle" was necessary. The whole ancient world had prepared, had willed its coming. During the fruitful silence when the Dorians were

Mycenæ (xiii Century B.C.). The Gate of the Lions.

accumulating within themselves the strength of their soil, Egypt and Assyria kept their lead. But they were discouraged and stricken by the cold of age. The torch, as it grew paler, leaned toward a new race. They were to become the initiators of the Hellenic Renaissance, as they had been the guides for the childhood of the peoples of the Archipelago.

The Dorian barbarian, after his contact with less harsh climates, had disciplined his violence, but he remained rough, all of a piece, and very primitive. His idols, the Xoana, which he cut with a hatchet from oak and olive wood scarcely two hundred and fifty years before the Parthenon, were so rude that they seem to date farther back than the engraved bone of the reindeer hunters. It is to a totally uncultivated race that the intellectual heritage of Egypt and Asia was to fall; in exchange for their high spirituality and profound sensualism they were to demand the sweep and power of Greek virility. The inhabitants of the Dorian coasts, of the islands which occupied the center of the eastern Mediterranean, saw sails in always greater number coming toward them from the depths of the sea. Their contact with neighboring civilizations multiplied every day. At the crossing of all the maritime routes of the ancient world, they were soon to feel the whole of it moving within them.

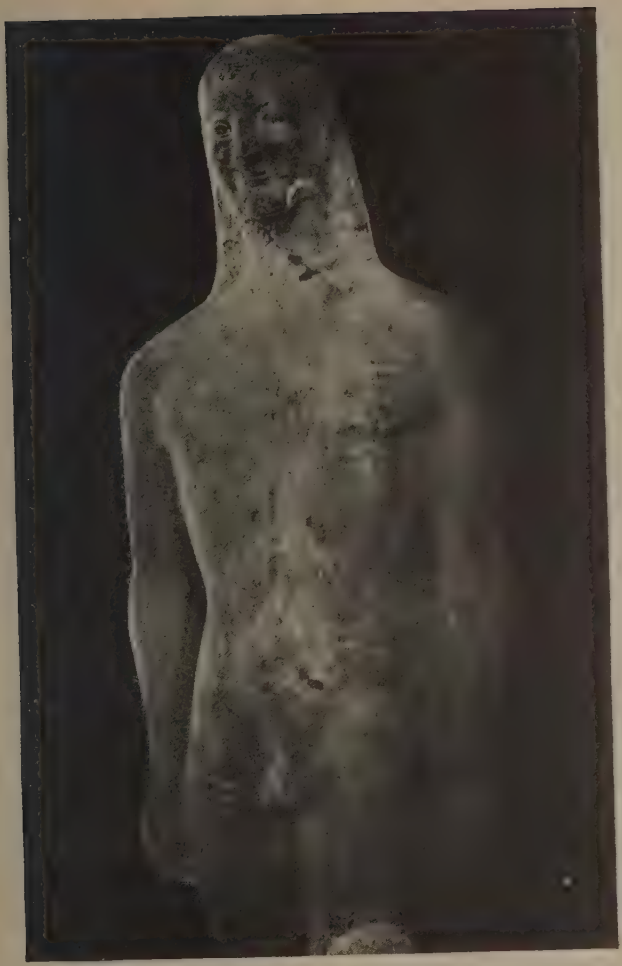
The Greeks had the privilege of inhabiting a land so inundated, steeped and saturated with light, so clearly defined by its own structure, that the eyes of man had only to open, to draw from it its law. When man enters a bay closed in by an amphitheater of

mountains between an illuminated sky and water that rolls rays of light, as if a spring of flame welled up under its waves, he is at the center of a slightly dark sapphire set in a circle of gold. The masses and the lines organize themselves so simply, cutting such clear profiles on the limpidity of space that their essential relations spontaneously impress themselves on the mind. There is not a country in the world which addresses itself to the intelligence with more insistence, force, and precision than this one. All the typical aspects of the universe offer themselves, with the earth—everywhere penetrated by the sea, with the horizon of the sea, the bony islands, the straits, golden and mauve between two liquid masses glittering even in the heart of the night, the promontories so calm and so bare that they seem natural pedestals for our grateful soul, the rocks repeating from morning to evening all the changes of space and the sun, with the dark forests on the mountains, with the pale forests in the valleys, with the

Ionian Art. (End of the VII Century B.C.). Artemis of Delos (*National Museum, Athens*).

hills everywhere surrounding the dry plains, and—bordered by pink laurel—the streams, whose whole course one can embrace at a glance.

Except in the north, one finds tormented lines of hills, savage ravines, sinister grottos from which subterranean vapors issue with a rumbling sound, black forests of pine and oak; except in the harsh countries of the primitive legends where man recounts his effort to overcome hostile nature, there are few, if any, terrifying appearances; the soil is hospitable, the usual climate is mild, though fairly severe in winter. Life in this land keeps close to its earth, is active without excess, and simple. Neither misery nor wealth nor poverty. Houses are of wood, clothing of skins, and there is the cold water of the torrents to wash off the dust and blood of the stadium. There is not much meat, that of the goat which grazes among the fissures of the rocks, perhaps, but there is a little wine mixed with resin and honey and kept in skins; there are milk, bread, the fruits of the dry countries, the orange, the fig, and the olive. There is nothing on the horizon or in social life which could give birth to or develop mystic tendencies. A nature religion exists, a very rough one—in the beliefs of the people, perhaps even rather coarse, but welling up from springs so pure and so poetized by the singers that when the philosophers think to oppose it they do no more than extract from it the rational conception of the world barely hidden in its symbols. Doubtless man fears the gods. But since the gods resemble him, they do not turn his life from the normal and natural relation-



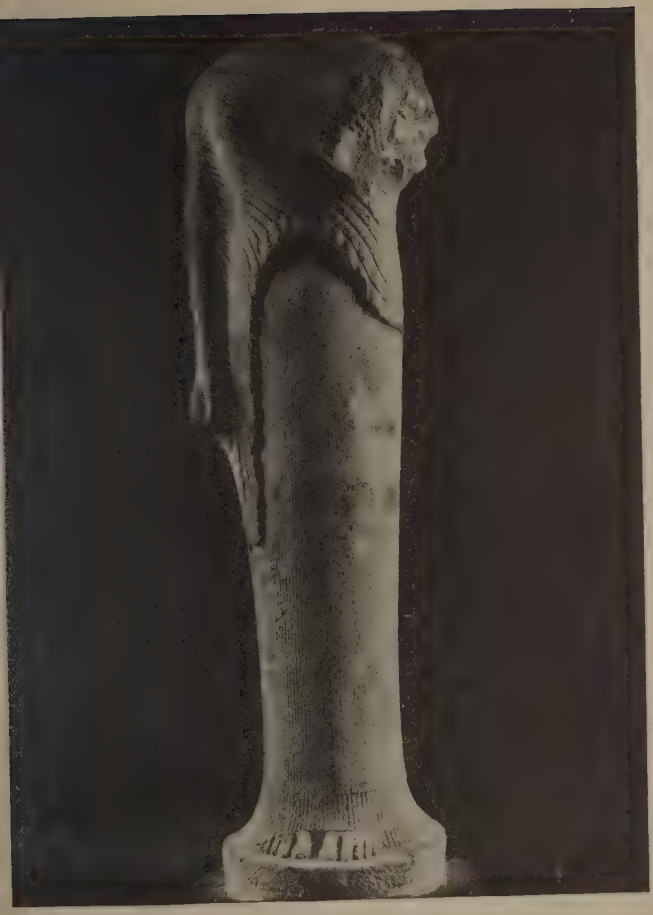
DORIAN ART (beginning of the VI Century). Athlete, known as the Apollo of Thera (*National Museum, Athens*).

ships which bind it with that of other men. The priest has but little influence. Greece is perhaps the only one of the old countries where the priest did not live outside the pale of popular life in order to represent to the people the great mysteries as a world apart. Hence the rapidity of this people's evolution and the freedom of its investigations.

DORIAN ART (VI Century). Athlete, bronze statuette (*private collection*).

III

Greece troubles herself but little, and then only at the very beginning of her art, with the enemy powers which hamper our first steps. Although man already places himself under the protection of the intelligent forces, he has not forgotten the struggles which his ancestor was forced to maintain against the brutal forces of a universe which repulsed him. This memory is inscribed in the sculptures which, on the pediment of the Parthenon of Pisistratus, showed Zeus struggling against Typhon, or Herakles throwing Echidna to earth. A barbarous work, violently painted with blues, greens, and reds, a memory of avalanches, of terrifying caverns, of the storms of the north, it was a nightmare of savages still ill taught by Asia and Egypt, but becoming curious and already



Ionian Art (580 B.C.). Hera of Samos (*Louvre*).

eager to comprehend. The hell of the pagans will last but a short time.

The temple where these idols reign, these bulls, these twisted serpents, these astonished visages with green beards, is, moreover, in its principle, what it will be in the greatest periods. Architecture is the collective, necessary art which appears first and dies first. The primordial desire of man, after food, is shelter, and it is in order to erect that shelter that, for the first time, he appeals to his faculty of discovering in natural constructions a certain logic whence, little by little, the law will issue forth and permit him to organize his life according to the plan of the universe. The forest and the cliffs are the powerful educators in the geometrical abstraction from which man is to draw the means of building houses which are to have a chance of resisting the assault of rain and storms. At Corinth there already rises a temple with heavy and very broad columns, coming straight up from the ground as they mount in a block to the entablature. Several of them still stand. They are terrible to see, black, gnawed like old trees, as hard as the mind of the Peloponnesian countries. The Doric order came from those peasant houses which one still sees in the countryside of Asia Minor, trees set in the ground in four lines making a rectangle, supporting other trees on which the roof was to be placed. The form of the pediment comes from the slope of this roof, which is designed to carry off the rain. The Greek temple, even when it realizes the most lucid and the most consciously willed intellectual

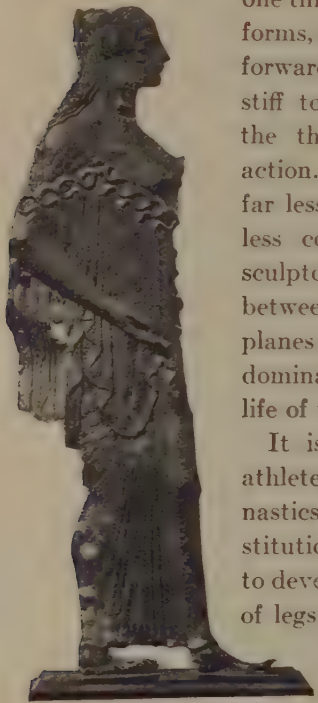
combinations, sends its roots into the world of matter, of which it is the formulated law.

On the sculptures of these temples the mind of Asia

Ionian Art (vi Century). Hunters, carved bronze plaque (*Louvre*).

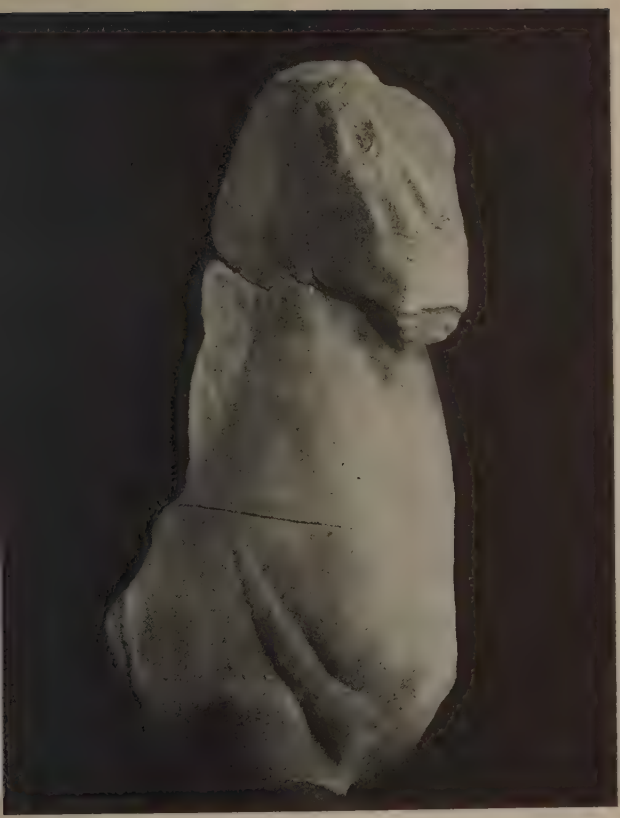
has left its trace. They are continued until the great century, but so assimilated in the nascent Hellenic genius that on seeing them one cannot think of direct imitation, but rather of those uncertain and fleeting

resemblances which hover on the face of children. The archaic Dorian Apollos, those smiling and terrible statues through which force mounts like a flood, make one think, it is true, of the Egyptian forms, because of the leg which steps forward and the arms glued to the stiff torso. But on this hieratism the theocratic spirit exercises no action. Dorian art is all of a piece, far less subtle, far less refined, far less conscious than that of the sculptors of Thebes. The passages between the very brusque sculptural planes are scarcely indicated. What dominates is the need to express the life of the muscles.



Ionian Art (vi Century). Athena, bronze statuette (*National Museum, Athens*).

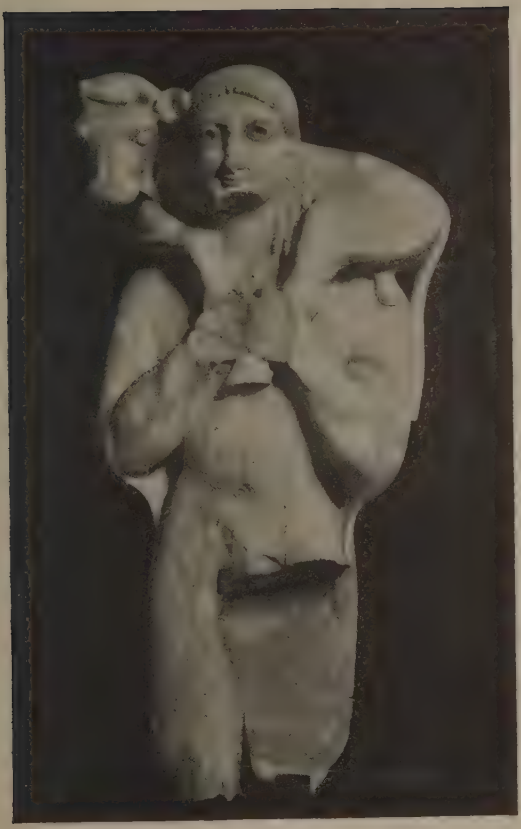
It is because these Apollos are athletes. The great cult of gymnastics is born, that necessary institution which is to permit Greece to develop the strength of arms and of legs, while parallel with it there develops suppleness of the mind in its constant search for the universal equilibrium. Already, from all the regions of the Greek world, from the islands, from the distant colonies, from Italy and from Asia, the young men come to Olympia and Delphi to contest the crown of olive leaves. In running, in wrestling, and in throw



DORIAN ART (VI Century). Head and neck of a horse (*Museum of Delphi*).

ing the discus they are nude. The artists, who hasten to these national meeting places, like everyone else who calls himself a Hellene, have before their eyes the spectacle of the movements of the human frame and of the complex play of the muscles rolling under the brown skin, which shows them as if they were bare themselves, and which is hardened by scars. Greek sculpture is born in the stadium. It was to take a century to climb the steps of the stadium and to install itself in the pediments of the final Parthenons, where it was to become the educator of the poets and, after them, of the philosophers. They were to feast their mind on the spectacle of the increasingly subtle relationships which sculpture established in the world of forms in action. There was never a more glorious or more striking example of the unity of our activity: athleticism, by the intermediary of sculpture, is the father of philosophy, at least, of Platonian philosophy, whose first concern was to turn against sculpture and athleticism in order to kill them.

Through the Dorian Apollo Greece passes from primitive art to archaism, properly so-called. The artist considers the form with more attention, painstakingly disengages the meaning of it, and transports that meaning to his work in so uncompromising a manner that he imposes on it the appearance of an edifice, whose architectonic quality seems destined to know no change. The Peloponnesus becomes the great training school of the archaic marble workers. Cleoethas, Aristocles, Kanakhos, and Hagelaidas open workshops at Argos, Sicyon, and Sparta; the citade



Endoios (middle of the vi Century B.C.). The Moscophorus (*Museum of the Acropolis*).

of the Dorian ideal becomes, before Athens, the focus of Greek thought. But Hellenism in its entirety is not to find its nourishment there. Sparta is far from the routes of the Old World, imprisoned in a solitary valley where mountain torrents flow; it is a fertile but a jealous country, separated from the great horizons by the hard ridges of the Taygetes, which are covered with snow even in summer. The people which dwells there is as closed as the valley itself, and it is these isolated surroundings which are for so long a time to keep up its voluntary egoism. Athens, on the contrary, is at the center of the eastern Mediterranean, and near the sea. It is the meeting point of the positive and disciplined Dorian element, which mounts from the south toward Corinth, Ægina, and Attica in its search for lands to dominate, and of the Ionian element which brings to the city, through the sieve of the islands, the artist spirit of Asia, made supple and subtle by the habits of trade, diplomacy, and smuggling. The glory of Sparta, in reality, is that of having offered to Athens a virgin soil to fertilize and also, by harassing her without mercy, to have kept her in condition, to have compelled her for a long time to cultivate her energy. Athens, tempered by these struggles, was not slow in showing her superiority. When the soldiers of Darius followed the traders of Asia to the European coast, it is she who was at the head of the Greeks, while Sparta, inclosed in the blind cult of her personal interest, took her place only after the combat.

Where are we to find the first step of Ionian art in

its march toward Attica—the uncertain dawn of the great Oriental sensualism rendered healthy by the sea and sharpened by commerce, which will flood the Dorian soul with humanity? The Hera of Samos is, perhaps, even stiffer than the Peloponnesian athletes, as it is nearer to Saite Egypt, which is unfolding at this moment and investing ideratic form with a humanity of its own. A tight sheath of cloth imprisons the legs, which are close together, but under the figure's light veil, with its lines like those on water, the shoulders, the arms, the breast, and the hollowed back have profiles of a moving grace, and planes which meet one another and interpenetrate with the delicacy of a confession. It is this spirit of abounding tenderness which is soon to take root on the Greek continent. From the end of the sixth century Dorian art and Ionian art were neighbors everywhere without having yet recognized each other fully. At Delphi, at the threshold of the Treasury of the Cnidians, Asiatic Greece saluted with a mysterious smile the rude statue maker of the Peloponnesus who had set up the women, the lions, and the formidable horses in the pediment of the Sanctuary of Apollo. The caryatids which supported the Asiatic architrave were strange, secret women; they had a winged grace, like that of an animal and of a dance; they seemed to guard the gate of temptation, which led to a warmth within, like that of the sun, and to untasted intoxications. The Dorian spirit and the Ionian spirit—the young countryman bursting with vigor and the woman bedecked, caressing, questionable—met and loved.

Attic art, which in its adult age was to be the great classic sculpture, austere and living, was to be born of their union.

IV

Marble had been skillfully treated in Athens for more than a hundred years, and the Acropolis, especially at the time of Pisistratus, had been covered with monuments and statues. But Endoios, the great Athenian master of the sixth century, still remained subject to Ionian traditions. It was only on the eve of the Median wars that the Hellenic synthesis, before manifesting itself by the collective action of resistance to the invader, is outlined in certain minds.

Undoubtedly, a people is too complex an organism, and one whose generating elements merge too closely and are too numerous to permit us to determine the degree of influence of each one of these elements in all the acts which express the people. It is like a river made up of a hundred streams, of a thousand torrents or brooks which bring to it, mixed together, the snow swept down by avalanches, the mud of clay countries, sand and flint, and the coolness and aroma of the forests it has crossed. It is the river, a broad living unity, rolling the same waters with the same sound. The men working at a particular period supply all the intermediary degrees which the future needs in order to pass from one group of men to another without effort and without finding in them differences of aspiration, though they themselves had imagined that they differed profoundly. And the men of this time

Ionian Art (end of vi Century B.C.). Caryatid of the Treasury of the Cnidians, detail (*Museum of Delphi*).

are united to those who precede them and to those who follow them by necessary relationships wherein the mysterious continuity of our activity is manifested. It is not possible to fix the moment or to designate the work in which the Hellenic soul, as we call it to-day, tried to define itself for the first time. We can only turn our eyes to those works which possess the first quiver of life, over which there seems to pass the first breath of liberty and spiritual joy, in order that we may surprise in them the awakening of a new humanity to the beauty of living.

The young women found near the Erechtheion, twenty years ago, amid the rubbish of the foundations of the Parthenon, where the Greek workmen had put them after the sacking and burning of the Acropolis by the soldiers of Xerxes, were, perhaps, the first who had the smile of intoxication which announces the awakening. Undoubtedly the perfume of the islands was predominant with them. They think above all of pleasing; they are feminine; an invincible amorous force shines from them and accompanies them with a murmur of desire. But on seeing the surety of their planes and their definite and powerful equilibrium, we cannot doubt that the Dorian artisan, who was then working at Ægina, Corinth, and even Athens, had had repeated contacts with the Ionian immigrant whom the Persian conquest had driven back to the Occident.

Brought from the Orient by the adventurers of the sea—the men who told such lying, intoxicating, and savage tales—these women take good care not to

shock the hard, austere world which they have come to visit. They remain motionless, holding up their robes with one hand. Their red hair, which hangs on their backs and whose tresses fall on each side of their necks to rest on their breasts, is plaited and curled; it is dyed, doubtless, and streams with jewels. Sometimes their foreheads are diademed, their wrists encircled with bracelets, their ears loaded with rings. From head to foot they are painted, with blue, red, ochre, and yellow, and their eyes of enamel glow in their smiling faces. These creatures so barbarously illuminated, dazzling and bizarre as the birds of the tropics, have the strong savor of the painted and adorned women of the Orient; they are somewhat vulgar, perhaps, but fascinating none the less, like things from afar off, like fairy-tale beings, childish animals, pampered slaves. They are beautiful. We love them with a tenderness which cannot exhaust itself. The whole after-world has issued from their firm, slender flanks.

IONIAN ART (end of the VI Century B.C.). Orante (*Museum of the Acropolis*).

They have overturned the curious notions that were anchored in us by academic idealism. For three hundred years it regarded immaculate marble as a sentimental emblem of serenity—one which never existed, save in the minds of certain philosophers, at the hour when Greece was approaching her decline. And white marble also stood for a perfection which, it is to be hoped, we shall not attain—discontent, curiosity, and effort being the very condition of life. Until the complete unfolding of her art in any case, and probably until her fall, Greece painted her gods and her temples. Variegated with blues and reds, alive like men and women, the gods became animated at break of day, took part in the surprises and joys of the light, and moved in the depth of the gathering shadow. They belonged to the crowd that swarmed at the foot of the Acropolis, the busy, noisy, familiar crowd of a port leading to the Orient; they came out of the dirty alleys where stray dogs fought for scraps of offal. We see them pass before the shop windows where the port spreads out its quarters of mutton and lamb, its fruits, its heaps of spice, its dyed stuffs, and its glassware; they are in the colorful squares so full of cries and calls—of the odors of garlic, rotting food, and aromatic herbs. We see the naked children, the questionable traders, the sailors hardened by the wind, the women with the painted eyes, dressed in their garish clothing. The temples and the monuments covered with ochre, with vermilion, green, azure, and gold, are made up of the tones of the sky, of the space over the sea—greenish or flushed with

purple, they have the colors of the sea, violet or blue, of the earth, of its dress of thin crops and dry foliage, with the milky olive trees and the black cypresses as they marry their forms to the ever-present forms, of the sinuous bays and the hills. What is the role of the statue maker? It is to balance, in the lucidity and the firmness of his intelligence, all these scattered elements, so that on their apparent chaos he may impose clear relationships and harmonious directions.

The Apollonian myth kept watch in the consciousness—obscure as yet, but solid and swelling with primitive faith—of the Athenian marble cutters. The strange women who had taken possession of the Athenian fortress could not have unnerved for more than an hour the city's resistance to the Asiatic hordes which they had preceded by only a short time. Already the element of orgy and sentimental excess represented by their polychromy had been held in check at every point by clear-cut planes and precise contours, thereby sustaining its alluring, smiling action. These planes and contours mark the Athenian's extraordinary urge toward domination of the sensual impulse by the virile health of his nascent reason. The miraculous and fatigued soul of Asia recovers its strength and its faith upon contact with this fierce energy, which it enlightens with intelligence in an unexpected exchange. We have reached the mysterious hour when the flower will unfold to the light the tremble of its petals, which till now had been pressed together in their green sheath. These idols represent, perhaps, man's finest effort to discover in his conscious-

ness the approbation of his instinct. There is in them a tension of soul which moves us, an energy devoted wholly to searching out our agreement of an hour with a world whose secret harmony we feel to live within us. Ingenuous as youth, perverse as desire, they are as firm and as free as the will.

With them Greek archaism possessed itself completely of that architectural conception of form which may be very dangerous because it carries with it the risk of never escaping from it, as in the case of the Egyptians. It is admirable. It is necessary. It is a more elevated form in the eyes of some than the balanced expression of our earthly destiny which the fifth century was to realize among the Greeks. To adhere to it, however, is to pause over appearances of the absolute, beyond which intuition can advance no farther, and to forbid the intelligence to search out, in its relationships with the surrounding world, its general conception of humanity. It is to be afraid of approaching the mystery which we know to be impenetrable and which forever retreats, in the measure that we advance. To reproach Greek art with having been human is to reproach man for existing. And it is to forget, indeed, that the art of the fifth century, even when it broke the frames of archaic form to let the palpitation and the atmosphere of life enter them by torrents, retained all the principles which make the strength and the austerity of that form.

The Egyptian statue maker and the Greek statue maker of the earlier centuries, preoccupied solely with

Ionian Art (end of the VI Century B.C.). Orante
(*Museum of the Acropolis*).

establishing the architecture of their ensembles before they penetrated to the dense world of gestures and feelings, discovered the law of profiles and by so doing founded the science of sculpture. But the element which animates the block, which gives life to the form, is lacking, or, at least, it takes on a metaphysical meaning which separates it a little more each day from the human significance of our activity and leads it fatally to the desert of pure abstraction which is closed on every side. Egyptian sculpture, arrested for all time in its movement, unable to extend its research, set itself the task of rendering subtle the *passage*, the wave without beginning or end which binds one plane to another; it was absorbed in this problem to the extent of losing sight of the mother form which was the point of departure for the problem; and because it thus forgot, Egyptian art died without hope of resurrection. Saite sculpture made only timid attempts at independence; it recommenced the same task, it imposed on granite and bronze the docility of clay, it saw in them the undulation of water, it let light and shade glide over them like clouds over the soil. But it exhausted itself in modulating the inflections of its dream much sooner than Theban sculpture did, because Thebes, at least, made a long effort to reach the formulation of this dream, and because after this dream nothing more remains if the external world is forever banned. Antæus needed to touch the earth again. The Greek sculptor, free to explore the world of appearances at his ease, did not fail to perceive that in discovering the relationships

f the planes he was to discover the ties which bind o man and to one another all the phenomena of the enses which reveal the universe to us. The *passage*, vherein the Egyptians saw only a metaphysical exer-ise—however admir-ible, becomes, with he Greek, the instru-nent of sensuous and ational investigation. After him *the* passage *was to the sculptural plane what philosophy is to science.*

Ionian Art (end of the VI Century). Samian woman (*Museum of the Acropolis*).

It is on this account that we love the little painted idols, the astonished and barbarous orantes of the primitive Acropolis. They are at the point of highest tension which we find in Greek thought, at the decisive moment when human genius is to choose the path it is to take. The Median wars came. Athens, at the head of the Greek cities, gave to history one of its finest spectacles. She was to temper her physical strength in sacrifice and suffering, she was to use the repose of mind, which the war was to bring her, to bequeath to the next generation immense intellectual

reserves that rush forth in forests of marble, tragedies, and triumphal odes. Thus always, in the course of our history, the great flowering of the mind follows the great animal effort, and the men of action engender the men of thought. We are approaching the hour when human enthusiasm had its hour of most powerful exaltation. The creatures of marble, so full of energy and sweetness, who peopled the citadel, had just been finished when the Persians mutilated them; Æschylus fights at Marathon, Pindar makes the branches of the sacred tree tremble in the wind of his verse, Sophocles, as a boy, bares his body to sing the Pæan on the shore of Salamis. Such vitality uplifts the artists who are to work among the ruins of the Acropolis, that, instead of setting up anew the statues which have been thrown to earth, they find them good enough only to support the pedestal of the statues which sleep within them.

THE ACROPOLIS OF ATHENS.

Chapter V. PHIDIAS

I

THE philosophic sculpture is born of liberty and dies because of it. The slave in Assyria could describe vividly the things he was permitted to see; in Egypt, he could give a definition of form as firm as the discipline which bowed him down, as full of nuances, as moving as the faith which sustained him. The free man alone gives life to the law, lends to science the life of his emotion, and sees that in his own mind we reach the crest of that continuing wave which attaches us to things in their entirety—until the day when science kills his emotion.

The artist of to-day is afraid of words, when he does not fall a victim to them. He is right to refrain from

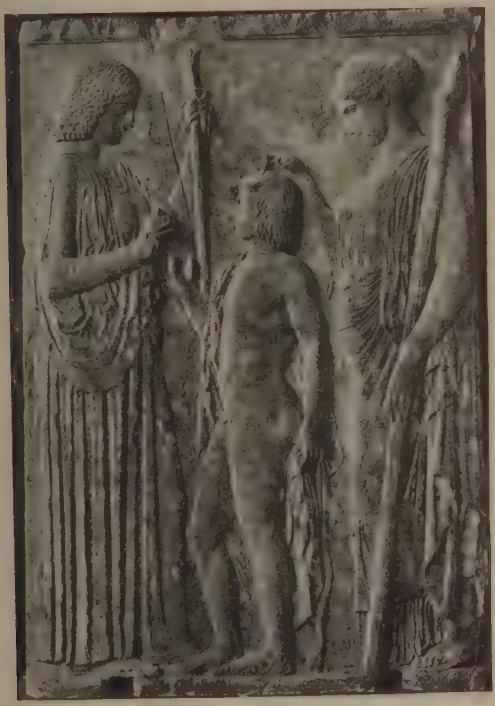
listening to the professional philosopher and especially to refrain from following him. He is wrong to be afraid of passing for a philosopher. Also, if we have no right to forget that Phidias followed the discourses of Anaxagoras, we recognize that he might, without

ÆGINA (beginning of the v Century). Temple of Athena.

loss, have been ignorant of metaphysics. He looked upon life with simplicity, but what he could see of it developed in him so lucid a comprehension of the relationships which, for the artist, make up its unity and continuity, that minds skillful in generalizing could extract from his work the elements out of which the modern world has come. Phidias formed Socrates [1] and Plato—unknown to themselves, doubtless—when

[1] It must be recalled that Socrates worked as a sculptor.

.e materialized for them, in the clearest, the most ·eracious, and the most human of languages, the nysterious affinities which give life to ideas.



Attic Art (about 475). Demeter of Eleusis (*National Museum, Athens*).

We see the philosophic spirit as it is born at the beginning of the fifth century, still hesitating and astonished at the daylight; it appears already in the "Charioteer" and in the statues of Ægina. Sculptural

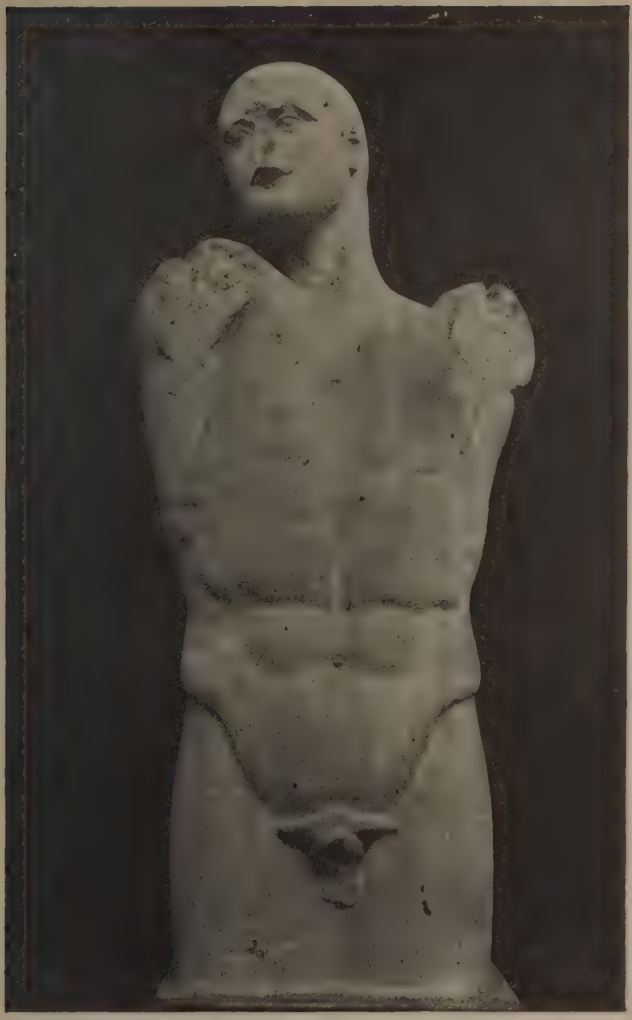
science, which is not obliged to copy form, but rather to establish the planes which reveal the profound law of structure and the conditions of equilibrium of form—sculptural science already exists. The "Charioteer" is as straight as a tree trunk; one feels the framework within it, one sees how it is defined by all its contours. It is a theorem of bronze. But in the folds of its rigid robe, in its narrow bare feet planted flat on the ground, its nervous arm and open fingers, in its muscular shoulders, its broad neck, its fixed eyes, and round cranium, a slow wave circulates which—by somewhat abrupt fits and starts—tries to convey from one plane to another the integrally conceived forces of life which determined these planes. The same implacable surfaces, the same harsh passages, are in the warriors of Ægina, with something more; there is here, in the abstract, a course which leads from one figure to another across empty space, and which thus creates a continuing whole, even if still a troubled one, lacking in suppleness and partaking of the mechanical; but in it an irresistible sense of relationship awakens; the firm flower is only half open, and it demands its full expansion.

There is no break in the conditions we are studying. The plastic evolution and the moral evolution mount in a single pure wave. Antenor has already erected the Tyrannicides on the Agora—the symbolic myths unroll in the frieze of the temples, and the great national wars mingle the divinities with the soldiers, on the pediments of Ægina. The athlete is to become the man, the man is to become the god, until the moment

Triumphant charioteer (462 B.C.).
(*Museum of Delphi.*)

when the artists, having created the god, find in him the elements of a new humanity. Polycleitus and Myron have already taken from the form of the wrestler, the runner, the charioteer, and the discus thrower the idea of those harmonious proportions which shall best define the masculine body in its function of uniting strength, skill, agility, nervous grace, and moral calm. To Polycleitus, the Dorian, belong rude and gathered power, virile harmony in repose; to Myron, the Athenian, belong virile harmony in movement, the vigor in the planes of the muscles, which show in a vibrant silence when the contracted tendons press hard on the head of the bones, when the furrows at the bottom of which repose the nerves and arteries, conveyors of energy, hollow themselves out at the moment when the tendons grow taut. The one establishes the profound architecture of the human body, its strength—like that of a bare column—and its visible symmetry, which the gesture and the modeling scarcely break in order that the theorem may be established upon sensation. The other discovers the

Attic Art (v Century). Dancer, bronze statuette (*Bibliotheque Nationale*).



DORIAN ART (V Century). Athlete
(*From the cast in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts*).

theorem in the heart of sensation itself, to which the living arabesque returns as a geometrical abstraction, with the whirl of all its volumes, with the quiver of all its surfaces. By the one, man is described in his stable form, by his vertical frame, by the sheaves of the arm and leg muscles whose precise undulations mark out or mask the skeleton, by his straight belly, broad, sonorous chest, the circle of the collar bones and the shoulder blades carrying the column of the neck, the round head with its glance which continues it without a break. By the other, he is described in his action. It remains for Phidias only to penetrate the statics of Polycleitus with the dynamics of Myron in rounder, fuller masses, defined by planes more broad and more mingled with the light—and he has made the marble glow with a higher life and given a heroic meaning to that form and this action. In a few years, which fly with the swiftness of human imagination, anthropomorphism ripens.

II

And here is an admirable thing! Even by the mouth of its comic poets who had, however, been formed by the great works and fed by the myths of the past, this race needed to proclaim its faith. Read in the "Peace" the moving, religious saying of Aristophanes: "The exiling of Phidias brought on the war. Pericles, who feared the same fate and who distrusted the bad character of the Athenians, cast away peace. . . . By Apollo, I was unaware that Phidias was related to

that goddess. . . . Now I know why she is so beautiful." The whole of anthropomorphic idealism is in that speech. The Greek makes his gods in the image of man, and the god is beautiful, to the extent that man is lofty in mind.

On this simple soil, by this healthy race, religious naturalism was to reach its goal of deifying the natural and moral laws as men and women. The poet came,

DORIAN ART (about 460 B.C.). Temple of Zeus at Olympia. Combat of Centaurs and Lapiths (*Museum of Olympia*).

and his symbols gave resplendent visages to these deifications. What the Greek really adored when he was matured and liberated was the accord between his mind and the law. Whatever may have been said of it, anthropomorphism is the only religion that science has left intact, for science is the law deduced from the aspects of life by man, and only by him. Our conception of the world is the only proof we can offer of its existence and of our own.

The personified laws, the gods who have become real beings for the crowd, are not tyrants, not even the creators of men—they are other men, more accomplished in their virtue, more grandiose in their disorder. They have the faults and the impulses of men, they

carry the latter's wisdom and beauty to the degree where these become fateful forces. They are the human ideal opposed by human passions, the laws which it is our business—against the resistance of egoism and of the elements of nature—to deduce from the world and to obey. Herakles combats the accident, the thing that retards and opposes our progress toward order. He enters the forests to beat the lions to death, he dries up swamps, he cuts the throats of evil men and overpowers bulls. His hairy arms, his knees, and his breast bleed from his struggle with the rocks. He protects the childhood of the organizing will against the adult brutality of things. At his side, Prometheus starts out for his conquest of the lightning—that is to say, of the mind. The Greek refuses to have anything to do with the god of terrible distances who kills the soul and the flesh through the hand of the priest. He tears the fire from him. The god nails him down with pain, but he cries out in revolt until Herakles comes to cut his bonds. By dint of willing it, man creates his own liberty.

Thus from the man to the god, from the real to the ideal, from acquired adaptions to desired adaptions, the hero threads his path. The human mind, in a splendid effort, rejoins the divine law. Polytheism organizes the primitive pantheism, and, with admirable audacity, brings out the spirit of it, little thinking that this flame, which Prometheus seized for a moment, will, when it tries to escape, consume the world. The sensation of spiritual infiniteness that Egyptian art gives, and of material infiniteness that Hindoo art

gives, is not to be found in the art that expresses the Hellenic soul. We find in this art an accent of balanced harmony which it alone has, and which keeps within the limits of our intelligence. But the intelligence

Dorian Art (about 460 B.C.). Temple of Zeus at Olympia. Centaur carrying off a Lapith (*Museum of Olympia*).

cannot grasp the beginning and the end of the melody with which it is cradled. All forms and all forces are bound together in a deep solidarity; one passes into law, passes into divinity. Doubtless, in the enormous universe of which the city is the definitive image, there are antagonisms, there are action and reaction, but all partial conflicts are effaced and melted in the intel-

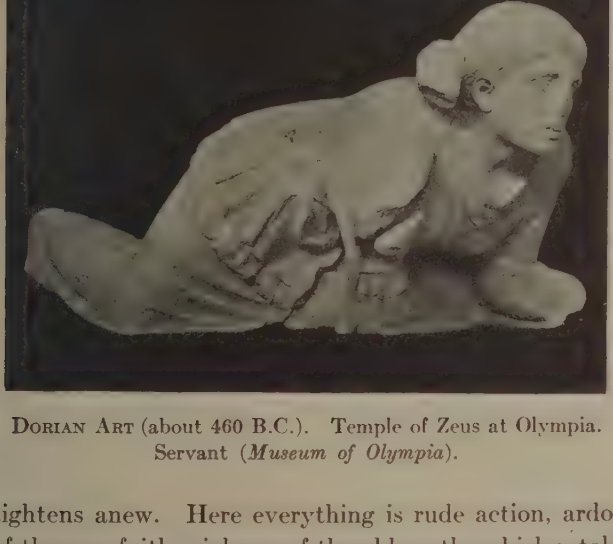
lectual order which man founds. Heraclitus has just affirmed, together with the eternal flow of things, the identity of contraries and their profound agreement in universal eurhythm.

It is this, above all, that the old pediments of Olympia

MAGNA GRÆCIA (about 450 B.C.). Temple of Neptune at Pæstum.

came to teach us. Earthquakes have shaken them from their place, man has broken them and dispersed their pieces, the overflow of the Alpheus has washed away their violent polychromy. Even as they are, with terrible gaps, often without heads, without torsos, almost always without limbs, held by iron supports, they remain one, coherent and integral as when, at the foot of Kronion in Altis, they towered over the forests peopled with statues. Inflamed with passion,

drunk with wine, the centaurs drag away the virgins. Fists and elbows strike; fingers twist and loosen the grasp of other hands; knives kill, and the great bodies sink under the ax, to the sound of the hammering hoofs, of sobs, and of imprecations. The brute dies, but the fever burns in his loins and his savage embrace



DORIAN ART (about 460 B.C.). Temple of Zeus at Olympia. Servant (*Museum of Olympia*).

tightens anew. Here everything is rude action, ardor of the new faith, violence of the old myths which retold the tale of the abductions of the primitive forests where all was menace, assault, and mysterious terror. Broad, animated modeling and surfaces cut with great strokes carry out the mood of struggle, of desire, of murder and death. And withal, a sovereign calm hovers over the scene. One might call it a surging, roaring sea

which none the less forms an immense and tranquil harmony—because the wave is continuous, because the same forces hollow it out, lift it up, and make it fall forever, to arise forever.

Some Dorian Æschylus sculptured this great thing at the hour when the fusion of the Apollonian soul and of Dionysian intoxication caused tragedy to well up from the breast of orgiastic music, when a prodigious equilibrium maintained the mystic agitation in the flame of the mind; and he felt within him the tremor of an instinct of harmony which did not end with the horizon seen by his eyes. In all the things he hears other things resound, distant echoes are born to swell progressively and to die away little by little—there is in nature not a single movement of which the germ and the repercussion cannot be traced in all movements which manifest nature. In the sculpture of Olympia there is an enchaining of causes and effects which has its perfect logic, but which is still intoxicated with the discovery of itself. The mind of the artist prolongs it unbroken so that he may gather up into himself its tumult and passion. One moment more and Phidias transforms it into spiritual harmonies which mark the expansion of the intelligence into the fullness of love.

III

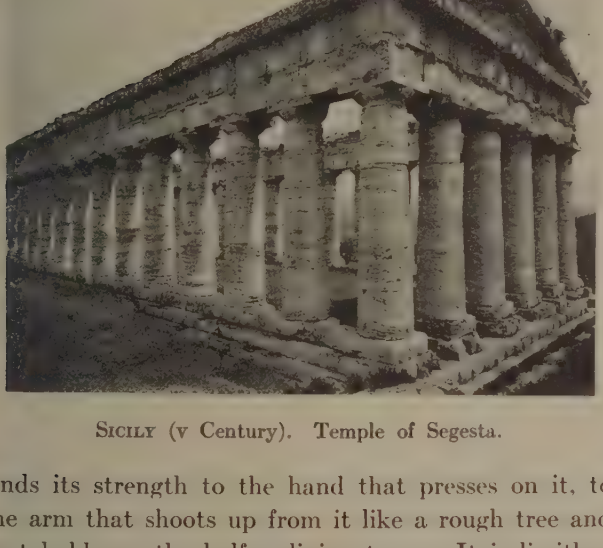
With him modeling is no longer a science, it is not yet a trade, it is a living thought. The volumes, the movements, the surge that starts from one angle of the pediment to end at the other—everything is sculp-

MYRON. The discus thrower. Copy of the Greek.
(*National Museum, Rome*).

tured from within, everything obeys inner forces in order to reveal their meaning to us. The living wave runs through the limbs, they are instinct with it, rounded or extended by it; it models the heads of the bones and, as ravines cut into a plain, it indents the glorious torsos from the secret belly to the tremble of the hard breasts. The sap, which rises in it and causes it to pulsate, makes of each fragment of the material, even when broken, a moving entity which participates in the existence of the whole, receiving life from it and returning life to it. An organic solidarity binds the parts together triumphantly. A higher life of the soul, for the first and the only time in history merged and confounded with the tempestuous life of the elements, rises above a world intoxicated and strong in the immortal youth of a moment which cannot last.

From the dusk of morning to the dusk of night the pediments spread out their scroll of life. In them peace descends with the night and light mounts with the day. From the two arms of Phœbus, which emerge from the horizon, stretching out toward the peak of the world, to the head of the horse whose body is already in the shadow at the other side of the sky, life grows, marches on without haste, and diminishes. The whole of life. Without interruption these forms continue one another. Like peaceful vegetation they come forth from the earth and, in the air from which they draw their life, unite their branches and mingle their foliage. Alone or entwined, they continue one another, as the plain into which the hill

melts, the valley that reaches up to the mountain, the river and its estuary which the sea absorbs and the bay which goes from promontory to promontory. The shoulder is made for the brow which lies on it, the arm for the waist which it embraces, the ground



Sicily (v Century). Temple of Segesta.

lends its strength to the hand that presses on it, to the arm that shoots up from it like a rough tree and that holds up the half-reclining torso. It is limitless space that goes to mingle with the blood in the breasts and, when one looks at the eyes one would say that at the depths of their motionless pools space weds with the spirit which has come to repose there and to recover its vigor. The mechanical course of the heavenly bodies, the sound of the sea, the eternal tide of its embryos, and the unseizable flight of universal

movement pass incessantly into these profound forms to blossom into intelligent energy.

A great and solemn moment! Man prolongs nature, whose rhythm is in his heart, determining, at each beat, the flux and reflux of his soul. Consciousness explains instinct and fulfills its higher function, which is to penetrate the order of the world, that it may obey it the better. The soul consents not to abandon the form, but to express itself through the form, and to let its single light flash out at the contact. The mind is like the perfume of man's necessary sensualism, and the senses demand of the mind that it justify their desires. Reason does not yet weaken sentiment; instead sentiment acquires new strength by marrying with reason. The highest idealism never loses sight of the actual elements of its generalizations, and when the Greek artist models a form in nature it shines with a spontaneous light of symbolic truth.

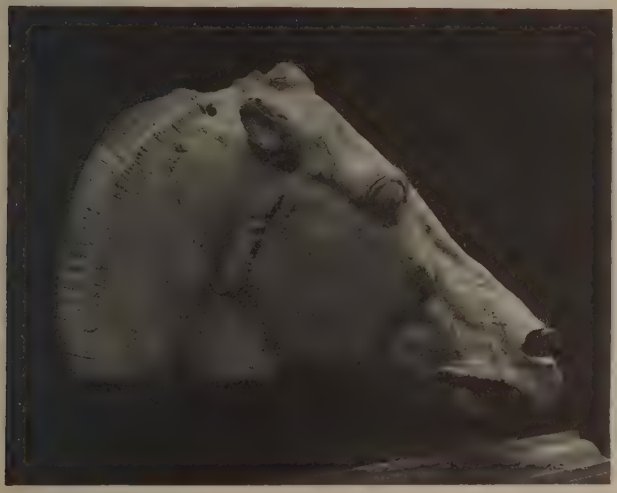
Greek art, at this time, reaches the philosophic moment. It is a thing of living change. Idealistic in its desire, it lives because it demands of life the elements of its ideal constructions. It is the species in the law, the man and the woman, the horse and the ox, the flower, the fruit, the being exclusively described by its essential qualities and made to live as it is, in the exercise of its normal functions. It is, at the same time, a man, a horse, an ox, a flower, and a fruit. The great Venus, peaceful as an absolute, is willed by the whole race. She sums up its hopes, she fixes its desire, but her swelling neck, her beautiful ripening breasts, her moving sides make her alive. She lends her glow

MYRON. The discus thrower. Fragment of a Greek copy (*National Museum, Rome*).

to space which caresses her, touches her sides with gold, makes her lungs rise and fall. It penetrates her, she mingles with it. She is the unseizable instant when eternity meets universal life.

This state of equilibrium, wherein all the vital powers seem to hang suspended in the consciousness of man before bursting forth and multiplying under definite forms, imparts its force to all Greek art of the highest class. The anonymous sculptor of Olympia and Phidias and his pupils, the architects of the Acropolis, express the same relations, the same prodigious and blended universe brought to the human scale, the same type of reason, superior to the accidents of nature and subordinated to its laws. But the language of each one remains as personal as his body, his hands, the form of his forehead, the color of his eyes, the whole of his elemental substance, which is written into the marble by the same stroke that renders the universal order which he has understood and marked with its external form. See the faith, the almost savage sweep of the man who made the statues of Olympia, his rugged and broad phrase. See the religion, the sustained energy, the reserve of Phidias, his long, balanced phrase. See, in the encircling frieze, the discretion of his pupils who have neither his freedom nor his power, but who are calm as he is, because, like him, they live in an hour of certitude. Man, the animals, and the elements, everything consents to its role, and the artist feels, in his fraternal heart, the joy of this consent. It is with the same spirit that he tells of the warmth of women,

the strength of men, and the rumination of oxen. A life as glorious as the summer! Man has seized the meaning of his activity; it is by what is around him that he frees himself and cultivates himself; it is through himself that he humanizes what is around him.



PHIDIAS (?), (about 440 B.C.). Tympanum of the Parthenon. The horse of night (*British Museum*).

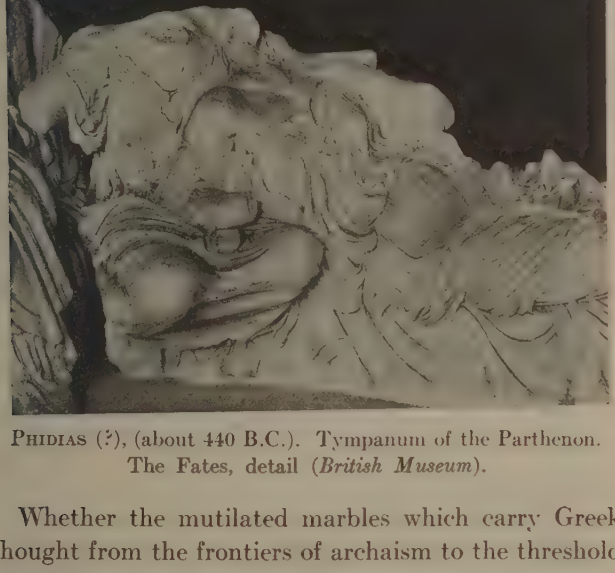
The bad Roman copies of works belonging to the last period of Greece, the soft goddesses, the draped gods brandishing their lyres, the figures from literature and works of the school have for a long time calumniated Greek art. It expressed to us a colorless people, assuming a theatrical attitude to overawe the future. The artificial heroism hid the real heroism, and the ruggedness and freshness of the primitive were effaced

by the fictions of the Alexandrine romancers. We used to describe the draperies of the "Fates" before having seen their knees, the shelter of their warm abdomen, and their torsos mounting with the power

PHIDIAS (?), (about 440 B.C.). Tympanum of the Parthenon. Theseus (*British Museum*).

and tumult of a wave to the absent heads which we divine as leaning over in confidences and confession. The anatomy of the "Theseus" and the "Ilyssus" masked the formidable life that swells and dilates them and makes its pulsations pass even to the fragments that have disappeared. The "Panatheniac Frieze" revealed to us the manner in which girls walk as they bear burdens, flowers, and sheaves, how horsemen defile, the tranquillity of intelligent strength dom-

inating brute strength, how oxen go with the same step to the slaughterhouse and to work. We had forgotten that these were men and women who had lived, who had loved and suffered, and beasts which used to dig the furrows in the thin plain of Attica, and whose fat and flesh used to burn on the altars.



PHIDIAS (?), (about 440 B.C.). Tympanum of the Parthenon. The Fates, detail (*British Museum*).

Whether the mutilated marbles which carry Greek thought from the frontiers of archaism to the threshold of the decadence are wrestlers or virgins, the ease of strength shines from them, and an irresistible sweetness. When we come forth from the murderous effigies of Assyria or the silent statues of Egypt we feel ourselves brought back into the living universe, after having attuned the primitive instincts to the

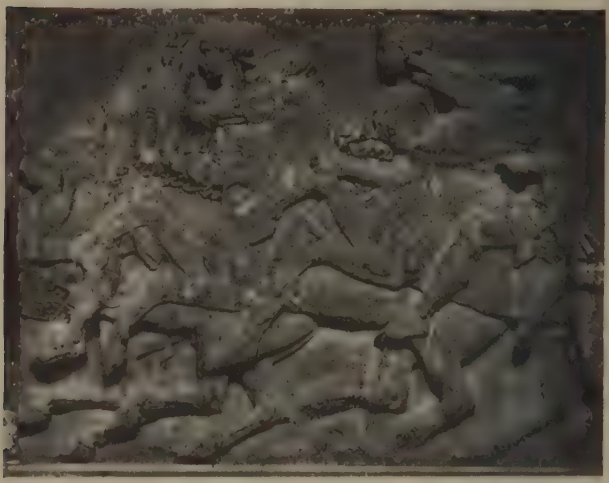
world of the mind. The obsessing anguish and the terror retreat into memory; we breathe deeply, we find ourselves to be what we did not yet know we were; we are the beings imaged by our presentiments.

Ictinos. The Parthenon (447-432), Athens.

We have seen the athletes arise quite naked in the light, as numerous as the old beliefs, and the young, astonished faces starting from the blue and green robes, like great flowers amid the fields. Demeter has left the ruins of Eleusis, tenderly to place in the hand of the calm Triptolemus the grain of wheat which is to give bread to men, and with it, science and peace. Blind desire and divine modesty, the eternal conflict that compromises or realizes our higher equilibrium—all this we have seen issuing from the dust of Olympia, with the brutes in their madness, the virgins assailed,

NEMEA (v Century). Temple of Zeus.

their beautiful bodies that struggle out of the embrace, their beautiful heavy arms in revolt. There, at the level of the ground, we have picked up the trace of the life of the little slaves of the old serving-woman,



PHIDIAS (school of), (about 440 B.C.). The Parthenon. Horsemen of the Frieze (*British Museum*).

and, at the angle of the pediments, we have felt the weight of the breast of women already feeling the movement of new life within them. With the good Herakles, we have carried the globe, swept the stable, and strangled the monsters; we have wandered over the earth to make it healthful, and our hearts with it. In the pediments of the great temple of the Acropolis, with the rough-grained torsos, the full limbs, the wave of humanity that mounts and is appeased, we have

recognized, in the projections into the light and the hollowings into the shadow, the image of our destiny. The panting Victories have hung upon their wings that we may surprise, under the robe that proclaims it, the hesitation of the flanks, the breasts, the belly, as they emerge into their prime. All these deified beings show us at once the roots and the summit of our effort.

Attic Art. Apollo (*Louvre*).

IV

The meeting of life and of the accessible heavens, this ideal realized on the face of the temples and in the intelligence of the heroes, was to flower, for the glory of the Greeks and the demonstration of the unity of the soul, on a political plane of struggle and liberation. Democracy is not fully victorious and consequently it is already on the road to decline, but Greece makes the effort from which democracy is to be born. With the wooden idols and the multicolored monsters of the old temples came the death of the oligarchy, the power delegated to a caste which, at bottom, symbolized accepted revelation. Tyranny, which, in Greece, is government by one man whose science has been recognized, the system whose apogee coincides, in the

fourth century, with the determination of sculptural science—tyranny is shaken when the movement of life invades the archaic form. The first statues to stir are those of Harmodios and Aristogiton, the men who killed the King of Athens. Then the crushing forces which Æschylus set like blocks upon the human soul are shaken, with Sophocles, to penetrate one another, to act on one another, and to cause their balanced energy to radiate in consciousness and will. Then Phidias transports into marble the poise of life, and man is ripe for liberty. Democracy appears—the transitory political expression of the antagonism and the agreement of forces in the cosmic harmony.

Then from every Acropolis a Parthenon arises. The chief of the democracy inspires them, the people work at them, the humblest stonecutter gets the same pay as Ictinos the architect, or Phidias the sculptor. At the Panatheniac festivals, with the ritual order ill observed by the enthusiastic populace, in the dust and the sunlight, to the often discordant sound of Oriental music and the thousand bare feet striking the ground, with the brutal splendor of the dyed robes, the jewels, the rouge, and the fruits, the city sends to the Parthenon its hope—with the young girls scattering flowers, waving palms, and singing hymns, its strength with the horsemen, and its wisdom with the old men. The protecting divinity is to be thanked for having permitted the meeting and sanctioned the accord between man and the law.

The temple sums up the Greek soul. It is neither the house of the priest as the Egyptian temple was,

PHIDIAS (?), Ionian school (?). Young priestess
(*National Museum, Rome*).

nor the house of the people as the cathedral is to be; it is the house of the spirit, the symbolic refuge where the wedding of the senses and the will is to be celebrated. The statues, the paintings—all the plastic effort of the intelligence—is used to decorate it. The

ATHENS (about 415 B.C.). Erechteion, portico of the Caryatids, detail.

detail of its construction is the personal language of the architect. Its principle is always the same, its proportions are always similar, it is the same spirit that calculates and balances its lines. Here the Doric genius dominates, by the austere unornamented column, broad and short; there the Ionic genius smiles in it, through the long column, graceful as a jet of water and gently expanded at its summit. Some-

ATHENS (end of v Century). Victory, fragment of the balustrade of the temple of Athena Nike (*Museum of the Acropolis*).

times young girls, inclining toward one another as they walk, balance the architrave on their heads, like a basket of fruit. Often it has columns on only one or two faces; at other times they surround it entirely. Whether it is large or small, its size is never thought of. We are tempted to say that the law of Number, which it observes with such ease, is innate with it; one would say that the law springs from this very soil as the shafts rise in their vertical flight between the stylobate and the architrave, that it is the law itself which halts them, and which hangs suspended in the pediment with a sort of motionless balance. The law of Number easily places the temple in the scale of the material and spiritual universe of which it is the complete expression. It is on a plane with the pure gulf which, at its base, rounds a curve formed by the cadenced wave that comes to sweep the blond sand. It is on a plane with its own promontory, which turns violet or mauve according to the hour, but is always defined against space by a continuous line, which the bony structure of the earth marks out distinctly. It is on a plane with the day sky, which outlines the regularity of its rectangle in the ring of the horizon of the sea. It is on a plane with the night sky which turns about it according to the musical and monotonous rhythm in which the architect has discovered the secret of its proportions. It is on a plane with the city, for which it realizes, with a strange serenity, the perfect equilibrium vainly sought by its citizens in the essential antagonism of classes and parties.

It is on a plane with the poets and thinkers, who

seek the absolute relationship between the heart and the intelligence in tragedy and dialogue, to which it is related by the drama of its sculptural decoration, irrevocably inscribed in its definite order. On the

ATHENS (end of the v Century). Temple of the Wingless Victory.

simple Acropolis it is a harmony that crowns another harmony. After twenty-five centuries it remains what it was, because it has retained its proportions, its sustained sweep, its strong seat on the great slabs of stone that dominate the sea surrounded by golden hills. One might say that the years have treated it as they have treated the earth, despoiling it of its statues and of its colors at the same time that they have carried the forests and the soil of the mountains down to the sea and dried up the torrents. One might

say that the years have burned it as they have burned the skeleton of the soil which crops out everywhere under the reddish grass—that eight hundred thousand days of flame have penetrated it to make it tower over the conflagration of the evening, seeming to mount even higher the lower the sun descends.

If one has not lived in the intimacy of its ruins, one thinks the Greek temple as rigid as a theorem. But as soon as we really know it—whether almost intact or shattered—our whole humanity trembles in it. The reason is that from its base to its summit the theorem bears the trace of the hand. As in the pediments, the symmetry is only apparent, but equilibrium reigns and makes it live. The laws of sculpture, the laws of nature, are found in it, with logic, the energy and silence of the planes, the quiver of their surfaces. The straight line is there, as solid as reason, the spacious curved line also, reposeful as the dream. The architect secures the stability of the edifice by its rectangular forms, he gives it movement by its hidden curves. The sweep of the columns is oblique; they project a little, one beyond the other, like the trees of an avenue. An insensible curve rounds off the architrave at the line of their summit. All these imperceptible divergences, with the fluting of the columns—a shell which breaks the light, a stream of shadow and of fire—animate the temple, give to it something like the beating of a heart. Its pillars possess the strength and the tremor of trees; the pediments and the friezes oscillate like the branches. The edifice, hidden behind the curtain of the columns, resembles the mysterious

DELPHI (end of the v Century). Capital of the dancers (*Museum of Delphi*).

forest which opens at the moment one enters it. The temple of Pæstum, which is quite black, has the appearance of an animal walking.

Thus, from the living temple to the eternal men who people its pediments and march in the circle of its friezes, Greek art is a melody. Man's action is fused with his thought. Art comes from him, as does his glance, his voice, and his breath, in a kind of conscious enthusiasm; which is the true religion. So lucid a faith exalts him that he has no need to cry it forth. His lyrism is contained, because he knows the reason of its existence. His certitude is that of the regular force which causes torrents of desire and the flowers to spring from beings and from the soil. And the Apollo, who arises from the pediment of Olympia with the calm and the sweep of the sun as it passes the horizon, and whose resplendent gesture dominates the fury of the crowds, is like the spirit of this race which, for a second, felt the reign over the chaos that surrounds us, of the order inherent within us.

A second! no longer, doubtless, and we cannot determine its place. It is mysterious, it escapes our attempt to measure it, as do all human works in which intuition plays the larger part. Did it perhaps burst out in a lost work, perhaps in several works at once? Toward the middle of the fifth century, from the sculptor of Olympia to Phidias, between the rise and the fall, there occurs in the whole soul of Greece an immense oscillation round about this unseizable moment, which passed without her being able to retain it. But she lived it, and one or two men

expressed it. And that is the maximum that a living humanity has a right to demand of the dead humanities. It is not by following them that it will resemble them. It may seek and discover in itself the elements of a new equilibrium. But a mode of equilibrium cannot be rediscovered.

HYPNOS (?), (V to IV Centuries?). (*Perugia.*)

POLYCLEITUS (school of). Torso of a man fighting.

THE ACROPOLIS OF PERGAMUM.

Chapter VI. THE DUSK OF MANKIND

I

THE heroic soul of Greece was to ebb away through three wounds: the triumph of Sparta, the enrichment of Athens, and the reign of intellectualism. Sensibility increased at the expense of moral energy, reason overflowed faith, enthusiasm was dulled through contact with the critical spirit. The philosophers, to whose development sculpture had contributed so much by giving life to ideas, were to deny their origin, laugh at the poets and at the artists, and discourage the sculptors through misleading their minds in the meanders of sophistry. We need not bear them a grudge for this. The equilibrium was about to break; no human power, no miracle could have re-established it.

And the soul of Athens, on the brink of the abyss to which her logicians were dragging civilization, was even then forging a tool with which the men of a distant future could build a new dwelling. The death struggle of Greece gave us freedom of examination.

Beginning with the last years of the fifth century, a furtive caress passed over the Greek marbles. The great forms, kept alive by the circulation of their inner energies, disappeared from the pediments, and the artist tried to call these energies to the surface of the statues, of the portraits, of the picturesque groups which, however, he isolated little by little. The form and the spirit, which up to that time had flowered in the same integral expression, now separated from each other irrevocably. The spiritualist searched the body to extract the soul, the skeptic no longer tried to derive from it anything more than sensual satisfactions. About that time a little temple was built on the Acropolis to house a wingless Victory. But the external victories that had descended upon it had kept their wings. They were to depart from Athens.

Greek sculpture is supposed not to have appreciated the inner life until the fourth century. It might be observed that from the Archaic period onward there are statues, like the Samian woman, or like any Orante of the Acropolis, whose visage makes us think of that of the Gothic virgins because of their naïve enchantment with life which illumines it from within. But that is not the question. People generally believe that thought cannot dwell anywhere save in the head

EPIDAURUS (beginning of the IV Century B.C.). Victory of the Acroterium of the temple of Esculapius (*National Museum, Athens*).

of the model. The truth is that it is entirely in the head of the artist. The inner quality of a work is measured by the quality of the relations which unite its elements and assure the continuity of its ensemble. And no art had more of the inner quality than that of the fifth century. The modeling of everything goes from within outward. The surfaces, the movements, the empty spaces themselves, everything is determined by the play of the profound forces that pass from the artist into the material, as the blood passes from the heart into the limbs and the brain.

PRAXITELES (end of IV Century). Hermes, detail (*Museum of Olympia*).

It is true that in a poor society, where the slave was well treated, where the steps of the social hierarchy were very near together, one which lived on an indulgent soil, in a health-giving air, near a flowered sea, human beings did not have an urgent need of one another. The normal expression of man is a resultant of the daily conflict of his passions and his will. The Greek sculptor knew the sentimental agitations whose reflections pass at times over the sternest among human faces. But it was only later, with the definitive breaking of the social rhythm, that these reflections

LYSIPPUS (school of). Ephebe, bronze, detail
(*National Museum, Athens*).

were imprinted there as indelible traces. Man, who was then to be characterized by a warped, suffering body and a haggard face, was defined for Phidias by a complete organic equilibrium wherein the calm of the heart spread through the harmony of the general structure, of which the tranquil face was only one

Scopas (352). The Mausoleum, detail (*British Museum*).

element. The head of the Lapith woman, that of Peitho, and that of the Artemis of the Parthenon express a profound life, but a peaceful one. It is like a great depth of pure water, full and limpid and unruffled. The world does not yet know water forever plowed by the storm, blackened by the poisonous miasmas that slept in it.

Praxiteles draws the spirit to the skin of the statues. As he sees the spirit floating on faces as an undefined smile, as a vague disquietude, as a luminous shadow, he fixes it there, and by so doing breaks that unity

PRAXITELES (school of), (end of the IV Century).
Aphrodite (*Museum of Naples*).

which gives to the forms of the great century their contained radiance. To express the inner life he seeks to make it external. And it is no longer as a dawn, it is as an evening, that the soul mounts from the depths to spread itself over the surface. Praxiteles is the Euripides of sculpture. His measure, his elegance, his mind, the subtlety of his animation, and the charm of his analysis do not succeed in hiding from us the fact that he doubts his strength, and that, at bottom, he regrets having lost the sacred intoxication at which he laughs. Under his fingers the plane gets soft, hesitates, and gradually loses the spiritual energy with which Phidias invested it. The expression of the form, distraught and as if a little wearied, is no longer the play of the inner forces, but that of the lights and shadows on its shell. The soul seeks to escape from the embrace of the marble. One sees this clearly in the great dreamy foreheads under the wavy hair, in the sensual and vibrant mouth, in the undefined charm of the face as it leans forward. That no longer means intelligence; that means sentiment. Art dies of it, but new life takes its germ from it and, much later and under other skies, is to flower from it. At the moment when human language and enthusiasm weaken together, the work of Praxiteles affirms, not the appearance, but the survival of the mind and a kind of transference of its function, which is to spend many long centuries in searching for its real organ and in the end is to find it.

His art betrays the coming of a kind of cerebral sensualism which we see appearing at the same hour

among all his contemporaries, to whom the friezes of the temple of the "Wingless Victory" and the capital of the "Dancers" at Delphi had already shown the way. Little by little, the deep structure is forgotten,

Niobide, copy (IV to III Century B.C.).
(*Banque Commerciale, Rome.*)

so that the surface of the figures may be caressed by desire, as the surface of the faces is marked by the artist's effort to depict psychological states. When the statue remains clothed, the robes become lighter than a breeze on the water. But, for the first time,

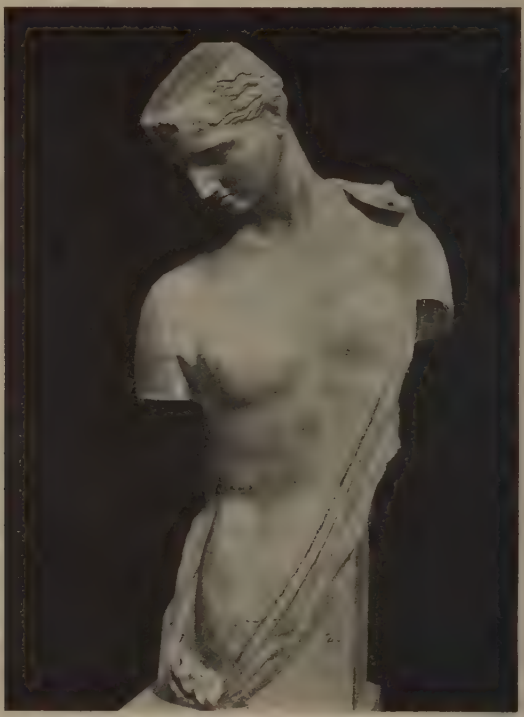
the Greek sculptor wholly unveils woman, whose form is significant more especially through the tremor of its surface, just as the masculine form, which had dictated his science to him, is above all significant through the logic and the rigor of its structure. For the first time he rejects the stuffs which the pupils of Phidias had begun to drape in every direction, at the risk of leaving unexpressed the life moving under them. It is without veils that he expresses the movement of the torsos as they draw themselves up to their full stature, the animation of the planes which the light and air model in powerful vibration, the youth of breasts, the vigor of masculine bellies, and the pure thrust of arms and legs. He speaks of the body of woman as it had never been spoken of before, he raises it up and adores it in its radiant warmth, its firm undulations, in its splendor as a living column through which the sap of the world circulates with its blood. These mutilated statues confer on the sensuality of man the highest nobility. Full and pure, like a well of light, intrusted by all their profiles to space which is motionless about them, as if filled with respect, these great forms sanctify the whole of paganism as, later, a mother bending over the dead body of her son is to humanize Christianity. And if we are intimately grateful to Praxiteles and regard him with a tenderness which does not resemble the heroic exaltation to which Phidias transports us, it is because he has taught us that the feminine body, by its rise into the light and the affecting frailty of the belly, the sides, and the breasts in which our whole

future sleeps, sums up human effort in the unconquerable idealism with which it faces so many storms. It is impossible to see certain of these broken statues where only the young torso and the long thighs survive, without being torn by a tenderness that is sacred.

II

But the early fervor is soon to be transformed; something a little wearied is to touch the force of the marble. Very quickly the forms lengthen, become more slender, flow like a single caress, and tremble with sensual agitation, with shame invaded by love. The modeling undulates gently, the *passage* becomes insistent, insinuates itself, and, little by little, effaces the plane. Wandering hollows dapple the skin, the breasts are uncertain flowers which never quite open, the neck swells as if with sighs, the knot of hair secured by the fillets weighs on the beautiful round head over which the tresses course like a stream. As at the end of Egypt, it is the troubled farewell to woman, a farewell in which sleeps the hope of distant resurrections. Look, after seeing the "Victories," after the "Dancers" of Delphi—so natural in their grace that they make one think of a tuft of reeds—look at the "Leda" as she stands to receive the great swan with the beating wings, letting the beak seize her neck, the foot tighten on her thigh—the trembling woman subjected to the fatal force which reveals to her the whole of life, even while penetrating her with voluptuousness and pain. And that is still religious, grave, barely infected by

heady agitation, barely turning towards the slope of sensual abandon—it is like the adieu of Greece to the noble life of the pagans. The heroic era of paganism



Magna Græcia (end of the iv Century). Psyche of Capua (*Museum of Naples*).

begins its death struggle with a smile that is a little melancholy, but tender and resigned. It seems as if this admirable race had had a feeling of the rela-

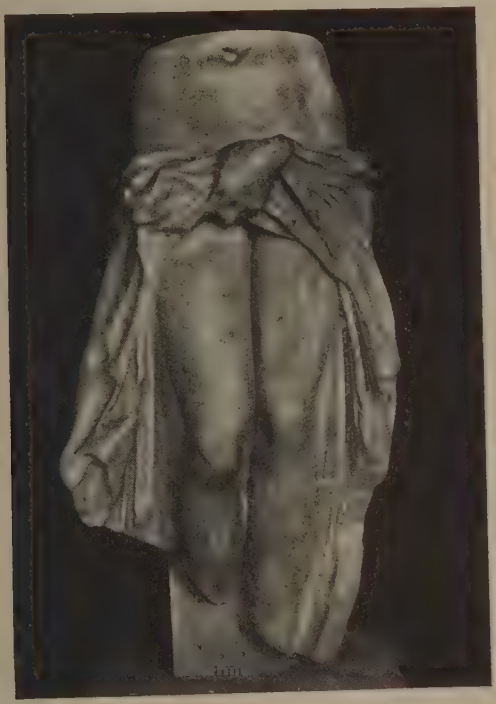
HELLENISTIC ART (IV to III Centuries). Aphrodite of Cyrene, detail (*National Museum, Rome*).

tivity of our knowledge and as if it had accepted the beginning of its decline as simply as it had accepted its dawn.

Thus, through criticism and sensuality, Greece came to study the actual man and to forget the possible man. Lysippus began again to cast athletes in bronze, muscular and calm young men, whose immediate life, no longer the inner one, goes no deeper than their rippling skin. The form, indeed, is always full and pure; it is dense and unsettled, but coherent, and has the look of a thing conceived as a whole. When these athletes left the stadium they seemed to descend from the temple, so well did the serenity, the assurance of their strength, still concentrate in them. But the hieratic idea of the first periods of sculpture, the divine idea of the great century, no longer interposed between them and the statue maker, who saw them directly. At the same time and by the same means he turned his sculpture toward those character portraits which, in reality, we know only by the Roman copies. The earlier ones—that of Homer, for example—reveal to us disenchanted nobility, discriminating fineness and reserve. But later we find fever, excessive sensitiveness, and virtuosity in description. It is a movement, moreover, which announces the gravest social crisis. Art is no longer a function of the race; it begins to make itself dependent on the rich man, who is to turn it away from its heroic course more and more, to demand of it portraits and statues for apartments and gardens.

The last of the great monuments of the classic epoch,

the Mausoleum of Scopas and Bryaxis, is made for a private individual, King Mausolus, and, by an irony which partakes of the symbolic, this monument is a



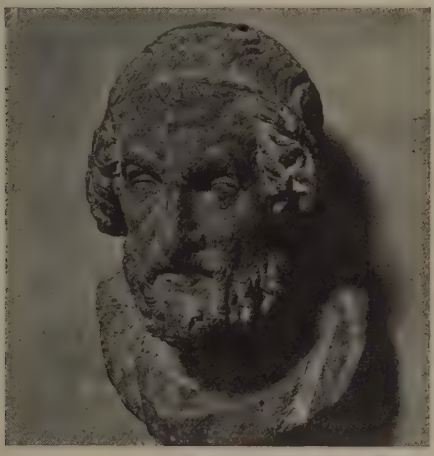
HELLENISTIC ART (IV to III Century). Aphrodite of Zonaglia (*Louvre*).

tomb. It is living, certainly—nervous, sparkling, and impregnated with intelligence. In the warriors, in the Amazons and their horses, in the races, the flights, and the attacks, there circulates a free, proud,

and delicate spirit, a rapidity of thought which almost forestalls the action, which brings into the material the resonance of the armor, the neighing of the horses, the sound of their hoofs beating on the ground, and of the vibrations of javelins and tightly drawn bow-strings. The chisel attacks the marble with the conquering fire of a too ardent mind in anxious haste to set down at the flood tide of its excitation, an enthusiasm already tainted with doubt. With its extreme elegance of form, its sharp mordant expression, and its direct gesture, it is a cool breeze that crosses an early evening. There are constant parallelisms between fold and fold, between limb and limb, between movement and movement. The empty spaces are very empty, we no longer feel the passage of that abstract wave through which the volumes penetrated one another and, from end to end of the pediment, gave the effect of a sea whose crests brought with them the hollows—which heave to a crest again. The hollow is isolated here, the wave is isolated; picturesque and descriptive detail profits by this dissociation to appear and impose itself. It is to tend, more and more, to predominate over the philosophic ensemble.

The evolution of the great periods is approximately the same everywhere; but in Greece from the seventh to the third century it appears with an astonishing relief. Man, when he realizes himself, proceeds like nature, from anarchy to unity, from unity to anarchy. At first the scattered elements have to seek one another in the darkness of the mind. Then the whole mass of the chaotic creature is weighed down by the soil, which

clogs its joints and clings to its heavy steps. Then the forms disengage themselves and find their proper places and agreement; their logical relationships appear, and each organ adapts itself more and more closely to its function. In the end the rhythm is



HOMER, bronze
(*Archæological Museum, Florence*).

broken, form seems to flee from form, the mind seems to wander at random, the contacts are lost, the unity disintegrates. Thus there are in Greek art four definite epochs: the Primitives, Ægina, the Parthenon, the Mausoleum. First, the stammering analysis followed, with the Archaic men, by a brief and rough synthesis. Then, when the mind is mature, a new and short analysis, luminous and compelling, which ends, with a single bound, in the conscious synthesis of a society in equi-

librium. Finally, a last research which is not to reach its goal, which is to dissipate itself more and more until it has reduced its fragments *ad infinitum*, has broken all the old bonds, and has, little by little, lost itself through lack of comprehension, fatigue, and the urgent need of a great, new power of feeling.

His forgetting of the essential relations causes the artist to become concerned over the accident, the rare movement, the exceptional expression, the momentary action and, most of all—when men turn back to the horizon of the mystical, the artist's solicitude takes the form of looking for fright, pain, delirium, for physical suffering, and sentimental impulses of all kinds. The plastic synthesis undergoes the same disintegration. It is then that detail appears; it tyrannizes over the artist. The attribute invades the form. The latter gesticulates in vain as if it wanted to defend itself, the attribute rivets itself on like a chain. Lyres, tridents, scepters, lightnings, draperies, sandals, headdresses—the whole rag bag of the studios and the theatrical dressing-room makes its entrance. The deep lyrism of the soul subsides, there is need for an external lyrism to mask its exhaustion. It was enthusiasm that made the statue divine; how is the god to be recognized now if he has no scepter and no crown? Faith uplifted the material and made lightning flash from it to the very heavens of human hope. That is over with. The statues need wings. In the fifth century the wing was rare on the shoulders of the gods. It was to be found among the Archaics as they tried to tear form from the chains of matter. It

Demeter of Cnidus (end of IV Century). (*British Museum.*)

is found among the decadents where it tries to raise the form, whose own ardor no longer sustains it. The "Victory of Samothrace" already has need of wings to rise from the prow of the ship, because of the

HELLENISTIC ART (III Century B.C.). Sarcophagus of Alexander (*Museum of Constantinople*).

complication of the wet draperies which weigh on her legs and make heavy her terrible sweep, the turn of her bust, and the tempest of flight, of clarions, and of the wind that rises in her wake.

III

Greek art, at the very moment that it was thus breaking up in depth, was scattering over the whole material surface of Hellenic antiquity. After the movement of concentration that had brought to Athens all the forces of Hellenism, a movement of dispersal began, which was to carry from Athens to southern Italy, to Sicily, to Cyrenaica, Egypt, the Islands, and Asia Minor the passion and, unfortunately, the mania, for beautiful things—in default of creative

MAGNA GRÆCIA (III Century B.C.). Aphrodite, detail (*Museum of Syracuse*).

genius. Dilettantism and the diffusion of taste multiply and at the same time weaken talent. It is the Hellenistic period, perhaps the richest in artists and in works of art that history has to show, but perhaps, also, one of the poorest in power of emotion.

There are few men to listen to the voice within them now, and, in a brief rush of fervor, occasionally to catch from it —like the vigorous sculptor of the Venus of Milo—a very noble, if somewhat dulled and disunited, echo of the hymn to life whose triumphal choir dies out in the past. The adroit and active author of the "Sarcophagus of Alexander" takes the subjects of the old Assyrian sculpture, for lack of its science, and transforms its force and its brutality into somewhat declamatory lyrical movement. The sculptors of Rhodes, especially, seek gesticulating and complicated melodrama in the sensational event and in literature, so that they may be surer to touch popular sentiment, which is beginning its reaction against the skepticism of the philosophers. Others, who cannot see significance in the normal manifestations of life, lure the patron by making their work tell anecdotes for him. We reach the irritating reign of the picturesque little groups. They are still charming sculpture, to be sure, of a learned and witty elegance, but without the naïve quality, and already announce monotonous factory work, trinkets, art for the amateur, and those coffins of the artist's dignity, the glass case, the shelf, and the collection.

These undefined currents, dominated by the sentimentalism of the middle classes and the elegant lassi-

tude of the blasé, act one on another, in harmony or in opposition, and follow or push back in every direction the hesitating wave that goes from the shores of Asia to the shores of Egypt, from Pergamos to Alex-

Sleeping Fury (III Century B.C.).
(*National Museum, Rome.*)

andria, from the Islands to the three continents. The incessant mixing of the populations of the coasts produces a wild maelstrom in which some waves from the depths, bringing back the violence and heaviness of Asia, arouse the passion of humanity to the point of desperation. But the Greek soul is no longer anything but a foam evaporating on the surface. Man has lost his unity. His efforts to seize it again only plunge him into deeper night. The *Altar* of Pergamos,

the last of the great collective designs that Hellenism has bequeathed to us, is the image of this disorder. Where sobriety had been, there is heavy luxuriance; confusion replaces order; the rhythm grows wild and breathless; melodramatic effort stifles all humanity, and oratorical power becomes emphasis and bombast. The artist, in the abundance of his speech, exhibits the noisy emptiness of his mind. His speech is ardent, without doubt, sumptuous in color, trembling with his clamor and his gesture, but it is a little like a mantle loaded with gold and gems that has been caught by the wind. Scopas had, at least, no fear of open spaces in his groups; he was too much alive; the sap of the primitive had not abandoned him; when he had nothing to say he held his peace. But the sculptor of Pergamos is afraid of those great silences through which the spirit of Phidias, when it left one form to go toward another, glided on its invisible wave. The sense of spiritual continuity is so foreign to him that he does not hesitate to replace it by the factitious continuity of external rhetoric. He fills the backgrounds, stuffs the holes, and chokes up every bit of space that he can find. When a man has little to say, he talks without a stop. Silence bores only those who do not think.

These screams, these imploring eyes, these desperate gestures correspond with the awakening neither of pain nor of pity. Suffering is as old as the mind. The men of the past were not ignorant of the dramas of love, or the dramas of paternity, or the dramas of war, or of abandonment, or of death; but they knew how

to gather from them an increase of power. When man loves life he dominates and utilizes pain. It is when he no longer acts that tears rule the world. The lachrymose heroes and the epileptic gods no longer have in them anything of the Greek soul; they no

PERGAMUM (beginning of the II Century). Altar (*Museum of Berlin*).

longer have anything of the human soul. It escapes through the bellowing mouths, the hair standing on end, the tips of the fingers, the points of the spears, and through the gestures that fritter it away. The world is ripe to adopt the antagonistic dualism that later is to tear civilization to pieces. Here is earth, there is heaven; here is the form, there is the spirit. They are forbidden to rejoin each other, to recognize themselves in each other. Man is to wander despairingly for ten or twelve centuries in the night that falls between them. Already the authors of the melodramatic groups of the "Laocoon," the "Farnese Bull,"

and the romantic suicides are no longer sculptors, but bombastic play-actors. Feeling, which is to be reborn in the crowds, is dead in the image cutters, who have been domesticated by the powerful. Even their science is dead. The statue maker is hardly more than a diligent anatomist, who follows exactly the relief of the muscles and the dramatized movement that fashion prescribes for his model. Sculpture does not even think of recovering something of the lost paradise through divine irony, for which it is not made. But through irony Lucian of Samosate is to console minds from which pitiless rationalism has driven out faith. The gods have deserted the souls of the artists to dwell in the hearts of stoics, who welcome them without a word.

IV

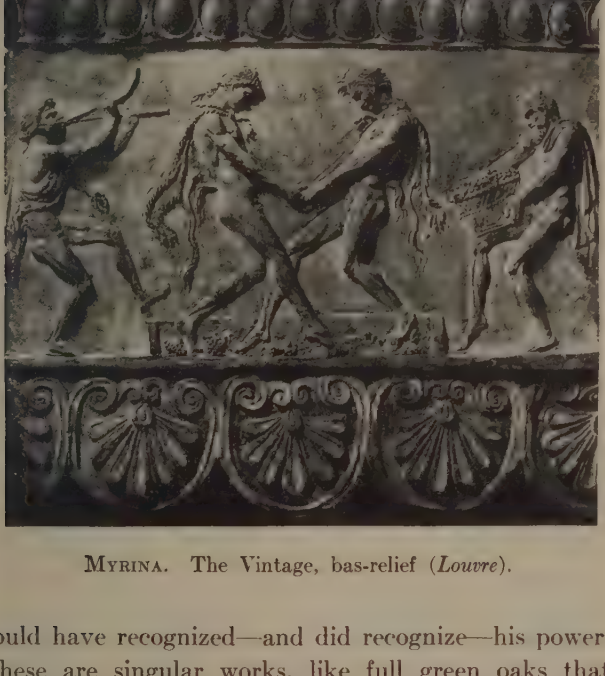
There is to be, indeed, during this slow, irremediable wasting away of the Greek idea, some moments where the decline is arrested, some startled gestures revealing a momentary return of vitality; occasionally a few green shoots come from the old transplanted tree. Nothing dies without a struggle. Upon coming into contact with newer races, the Hellenic genius, ashamed of its decay, attempts a vigorous return to itself here and there, and if it does not bring the gods back to earth, it sees, living on the earth, a few heroic forms around the flourishing cities and the illumined bays. To follow its infiltrations through the Latins of northern Italy and the Latinized colonies of the valley of the Rhone is rather difficult, the more so because, from the

DAMOPHON (beginning of the II Century). Artemis of Lycosoura (*National Museum, Athens*).

origins of Greek civilization, Magna Græcia had not ceased to cultivate thought, to cut marble, and to cast bronze. Pæstum in its swamps, and the temples of Sicily on their soil of lava and sulphur, where the herds of goats wander amid the cactus, bear witness to the fact that a collective power reigned. It was triumphant over wars, it defined the idealism of the race even more than it did the character of the cities. The evolution of the Hellenic desire had been everywhere the same. Magna Græcia had bared its goddesses to discover the woman in them at the same moment that Praxiteles had. But perhaps it had grown soft more quickly, as if submerged in voluptuous and enervating luxury. Southern Italy was richer than Greece, more fertile, less rugged, and more generously supplied with orange trees, with flowers, and with breezes. The beautiful statues of Capua have the fluidity of perfumed oils and the polish of the skin of courtesans; they are without any strength of their own, their modeling melts and flows like wax. Rome had little trouble in subjecting those who lived among them.

But it happened that at the contact of Roman energy the Greek element recovered a certain dignity. For two centuries, approximately, from the period when Greece, not yet conquered, but already resigned, sent artists to Rome, until the period when, entirely vanquished, she furnished only panderers, sophists, and rhetoricians—from the "Seated Pugilist" to the "Hercules of the Belvedere"—there was a strange union of the violent Latin strength and the Hellenic

mind, purified and made subtle by the approach of death. And from this marriage came fruits at once so tart and so ripe that before them Michael Angelo



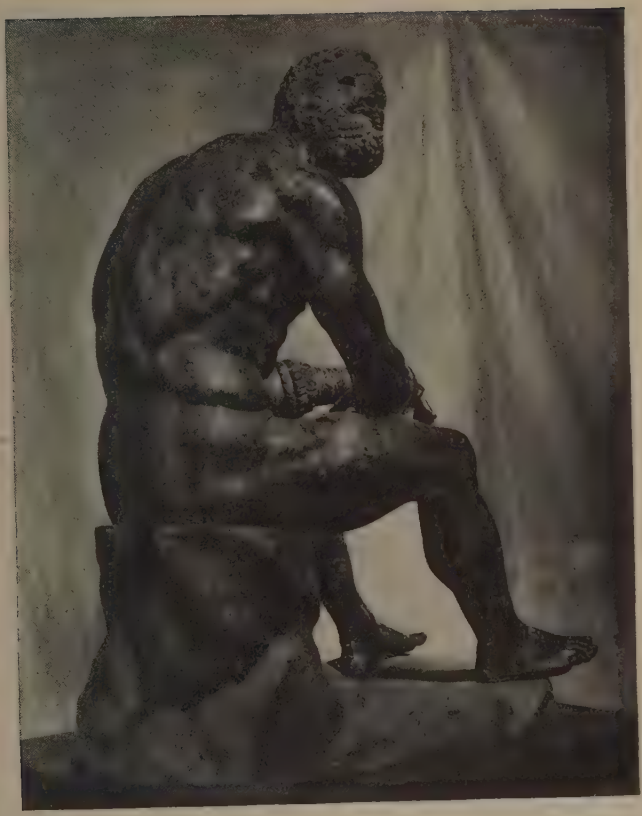
MYRINA. The Vintage, bas-relief (*Louvre*).

could have recognized—and did recognize—his power. These are singular works, like full green oaks that have been struck by lightning. We do not know whether they are Roman, because of the hilly modeling, the exaggerated expressiveness of the projections, and the tense brutality; or Greek, because of the mastery that fixes all these qualities in coherent form, that draws forth and distributes the spirit of the form.

The accord between the inner life of the recreated organism and its mode of meeting with the light on its surface is complete. In these works instinct is dominated by intelligence, and must follow wherever and

HELLENISTIC ART. Bacchus and Ariadne. Sarcophagus, fragment (*Louvre*).

however intelligence directs it. It was surely Latinized Greeks in Sicily who dug out from the rocks, which look toward the sparkling sea, those marble amphitheaters where the shepherds sat beside the gods. It was Latinized Greeks who built and decorated Pompeii. It was Latinized Greeks, saturated with that concrete poetry which the French soil infuses in those whom it nourishes, who built Arles



GRECO-ROMAN ART. Pugilist, bronze (II Century B.C.).
(*National Museum, Rome.*)

and Nîmes and surprised those beautiful women at the bath as they crouch on one leg which flattens under the weight of the torso, with its soft breasts, the fat fold at the belly, and the hollow in the small of the back, where the shadow moves with the undulating surface. At Rome itself, under Augustus, with the Roman copyists all around him, Pasiteles founded a Greek school. And it was in Rome, under his leadership and as an evident reaction against Asiatic sculpture, that the Greek sculptors attempted an impossible return to Archaic austerity.[1] Everywhere else, in Attica, in Asia, and in the Islands, Hellenism reacts in only a negative way against the sea of sentimentalism that arises from the depths.

V

But it still discusses, it wrangles, and, let us add, it tries, in the wreck of its spirit, to bequeathe the essential lesson of that spirit—if not by the language of form which it scarcely knows any longer, at least by words. About the first century the whole civiliza-

[1] I believe that the famous throne of Venus (of the Museo Nazionale in Rome), the central element of which serves as the headpiece to the Introduction to this book, and which has heretofore been attributed to the fifth century, must be restored to this school, of which it would be the masterpiece. Not to mention the place where it was discovered, not to speak of the nude figure in it—which, by the way, is inferior to the rest of the work—and which the artists of the fifth century would not have ventured to use, there are some strange details in it like the pillows, a certain negligence of style, a certain fashionable elegance, a certain technical cleverness, a spirit more elegant and refined than grave, a mixture of exquisite culture and voluntary naïveté, a shade of literature very far from the force and the austerity of the predecessors of Phidias.

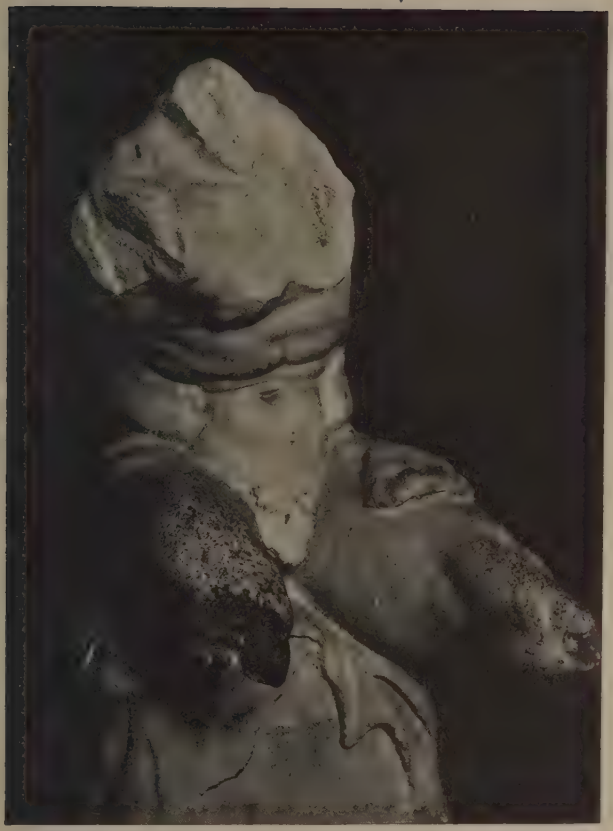
tion of antiquity concentrates around Alexandria, as if to take an inventory of its conquests. The Egyptian, in his weariness, is at the back of the stage, but the

HELLENISTIC ART. Eros and Psyche (*Louvre*).

Jew and the Greek stand before the audience, applauded or hooted, friends or enemies. Now alone, now followed by fanatical multitudes, they work in the fever,

the trepidation, and the clamor of a ceaselessly jostling and renewed cosmopolitanism. On a bed of abject vices, of intensified asceticisms, among uncompromising mystics and indulgent skeptics, the idea ferments. Philosophers, critics, romancers, theologians, rhetoricians, artists—this whole world mingles together and shouts. The artist goes in for theology, the philosopher for romances, the theologian for criticism, the romancer for rhetoric. It is a unique moment in the history of mankind; Egypt contributes its mystery, Greece its reason, Asia its god. And in spite of Egypt, Greece, and Asia, the synthesis of the ancient world, that is to be effected in the too aristocratic domain of the mind by the enthusiasm of the prophets and the subtlety of the sophists, is to pass over the mass of humanity without satisfying the hunger of its needs. The world is wearied with thinking, it tempers its unsettled ideal in its primitive element once more—in the innocence of the people. A new mythology is to triumph over the philosophers, who are preparing its unfolding.

Social surroundings such as these do not permit belief in a great Alexandrian art, which would have been lost. Neither strong architecture nor great sculpture reposes on systems, especially when the systems interpenetrate and vary incessantly. The source of plastic inspiration had dried up in the too complicated mind of the upper classes and had not yet appeared in the dark soul of the people. At Alexandria, as at other places, there were admirable renewals, spiritual leaps as straight as those of a dying flame, the gleams of a deep love. Certain bas-reliefs of Alexandrian, Greco-Latin,



GRECO-ROMAN ART. APOLLONIOS (I Century B.C.). Hercules of the Belvedere (*Museum of the Vatican*).

or Hellenistic origin—the matter is of little importance for the same spirit insinuates itself everywhere—certain bas-reliefs seize upon us through the liveliness and the grace—the joy rescued from intellectual pessimism, the ardent abandon to the intoxication of enjoyment through understanding, and of understanding through enjoyment. The fruit of the vineyard is ripe, the vintagers gather it, to the sound of flute and cymbals; they dance on the grapes. A long, long winter may come. The round of the dancers grows wilder, the hair of the women streams, their heaving bosoms and their legs are bared, the panthers creep through the shadows to lick up the blood that is to flow. But this epoch, in which Egyptian hieratism often comes to tempt the dying inspiration of the Greek, cultivates "genre" sculpture, which is the unmistakable mark, on the dust of the centuries, of baseness and vulgarity of mind. These sculptors surprise the questionable professions in their picturesque adventures; they tell little stories that make you laugh or cry. It is the Japanese bibelot, done with far less skill, or the clock-top of the lower middle classes of our century with far more skill and not much more wit. The greater part of the bas-reliefs exhibit the same tendencies, the often confused and overloaded anecdote, and a background of landscape as its setting. They show how sculpture was corrupted in the Ptolemaic periods by the studies and method of painters. And that is the most serious of the social indications that can be found in this art.

This need of fusing the two great modes of plastic

evocation had been appearing in Greece itself for at least three centuries. Praxiteles looked on form as a painter rather than as a sculptor; Lysippus, also, at times, and the sculptor of the "Tomb of Alexander," and especially the decorator of Pergamos. The great classic sculpture had indeed made use of painting, but as an accessory means, to give to the form, already living through its own structure, the superficial appearance of life. Under the broad, simple tones which covered the decorative ensembles and remained tranquil in the light, the sculptural plane persisted. On the contrary, in the fourth century, and very much more in the Hellenistic periods, pictorial expression tends to get along without form and to model the surfaces by the mysterious play of the lights, the shadows, the half-tones, and the diffused envelope of the air. It is still a legitimate process when it is practiced on bas-relief, but it is fatal to sculpture. Form must live in space by its own means, like the living being. The planes determined by its inner life are the exact criterion of the statue's success or failure in its contact with the outside atmosphere. An envelope is necessary only to the painter, since

ALEXANDRIAN ART. Head of a woman (*Laffan Collection*).

he transfers conventionally, to a flat surface, the materiality and the depth of space. If the sculptor incorporates an artificial atmosphere with form, the real atmosphere will devour it.

In the epoch of Alexandria the confusion is complete. The mystics of Asia and the skeptics of Europe, wearied by their skepticism, need the vague envelope that destroys form and opens dreams as vague as itself. The great sculpture of Egypt, even while retaining its strong traditions, had already, in the Saite epoch, headed for these cloudy horizons. The anecdote surrounded by the mystery of painting, indeed the whole of Greek art from Praxiteles onward, tends toward them. Grandeur of sentiment having disappeared, sentimentalism, a new thing, was bound to germinate in the pain of the masses and the indecision of the intellectuals, to renew the energy of the world. It is only in these tendencies that we can find in Alexandrian art an attempt, even if an obscure one, to fuse the essential aspirations of the ideals of the ancient world.

The ideal of the Jew is justice. It is a limited and exclusive ideal, and, for that reason, uncompromising and hard. Like every excess of passion, the passion for justice, when it has no counterpoise, renders man unjust toward those who do not think as he does, and unjust toward himself, for his thought knows no other refuge than daily sacrifice and pitiless severity. He is unhappy and alone, for he is unacquainted with forgiveness. The ideal of the Greek is wisdom, the order of the world obeyed and disciplined by the intelligence, the conquest—patient and undivorced from

GALLO-HELLENIC ART (I Century A.D.). Crouching Venus (*Louvre*).

life—of a relative equilibrium. He has a strong feeling for what is just, but what is beautiful and what is true is to the same degree the object of his passion. He finds in each of these ideas the echoes of the other two, and completes, tempers, and broadens each one through the others. Phidias is in Pythagoras, and Socrates is in Phidias.

The Jews were bound to misunderstand Christ because he reacted as an artist against the ideal of justice which had made them unjust, and taught the lowly to pity the strong. The Greeks were far better prepared to understand Him. They knew Him from long ago. He was Dionysus, come from India and returning through Asia with the armies of Alexander; Dionysus the god of periodic resurrections, the god of primitive superstitions, of magics and sorceries, as he had been, in the time of Æschylus, the god of pagan drunkenness; Dionysus, the eternal god of the multitudes and of women. He was the God-man of their myths also, the hero, Herakles, Prometheus. Before Christ the Stoics had taught the conquest of the inner freedom, which is the measure of the discipline which we can impose on ourselves. Before Christ Socrates had died for man. The humanity of Christ was the testament of the ancient world rather than the preface to the new.

First it brought the sword. St. Paul was to betray Jesus and whisper into the darkened intelligence of the moaning world the revenge of the Jewish mind. The philosophers were to turn their backs on Him, but the suffering slaves and the women, of whom our

GRECO-EGYPTIAN ART. Portrait of young girl, on papyrus (*Archæological Museum, Florence*).

mind as well as our flesh is born, the women forever watching that the fire may burn on the hearth—the slaves and the women hearken to Him. Man creates the ideal, but he tires of it. When the ideal burns out in him it is woman who picks it up to let it sleep in her until another male voice comes to awaken it there. If art is feminized and softened in the mind of men, as all the works of this age testify, the will becomes virile and tense in the heart of women. And it is the latter development which kills the former.

Reason was dying alone, skeptical and disdainful. Sentiment was growing up alone, blind and groping. It was to conquer. It was the crowd and it was life.

The sentimental uprising of the weak ruins civilization. We are about to burn the books, smash the statues, gut the human temples, and lose our contact with the earth. What does it matter? We must accept these downfalls. It is they that are the condition of the morrow which makes reparation. On the western soil, plowed by Greece, the real thought of Christ is to be reborn in the speech of Prometheus, after more than a thousand years of darkness, furies, and misunderstanding. Perhaps it is this abyss that is contemplated by the old portraits of the last Egypt, with their faces of enigma and their shadowy eyes in which a light trembles.

DELPHI.

Chapter VII. INTIMATE GREECE

I

WHILE official art, the great decorative and religious art, was losing sight of its wellsprings, intimate art remained near them and continued to drink from them. The hero, who came up from the people, has disappeared, but the people is still there, and in it the Greek soul survives. The people undergoes the corrosive influence of intellectualism and of gold more slowly, and the flame of life smolders in it even when it is entirely extinguished on the upper levels. Even at the times of the worst decay the instinct of the multitudes contains all the elements of the higher life; only the awakening of new desires through the appearance of new needs is required to call forth the great

man and to ripen in him that instinct which the dead mass of his ancestors and the living mass of mankind have intrusted to him. Brutal animal power and the power of the intelligence are our only weapons for the conquest of our organization. The average civilized man, however, is as far from spiritual order as he is from direct possession. He has not yet attained the former; he has lost the latter. We are in the desert.

It is the people throughout the whole extent of the Greek world who gather up the scattered elements of the soul of antiquity. The workman of art takes the place of the hero. The uprooted tree is to cover the earth with leaves. From the pavement of the Greek cities emerges a world of trinkets, figurines of metal and of terra cotta, jewels, engraved stones, furniture, coins, and painted or incised vases. Yesterday the man of genius was at the service of the people. To-day the man of the people is at the service of the man of means.

The bond that unites the great artist with the artisan, the passage from the great sculpture to popular art, is the industry of terra-cotta figurines which were manufactured by thousands at Tanagra, among those Bœotian peoples whom the Athenians so greatly despised. The industry is not new. It had existed since Archaic times. But in the fourth century, influenced by the diffusion of taste, it was to perfect and extend itself. Like a little timid reflection it follows the evolution of the great focus. Archaic, when the latter is so, it becomes powerful and luminous with the focus; in the Praxitelean period the figurine

is frankly intimate. But before Praxiteles, the reflection is totally lost in the blaze of the focus. From Praxiteles onward, when the focus is growing pale, the

Fragment of stele (end of VI Century).
(*Private Collection.*)

little reflection, on the contrary, becomes a shining point of light in the gathering shadow. The great sculpture which was made to decorate the temples and to live in space fails when it attempts to turn to to intimate things. The figurine, made to decorate

private dwellings and to follow its owner to the tomb in order to win the gods over to him, is essentially intimate in inspiration and in destination. It was quite natural that it should attain its apogee in the century that brought the gods back among men. There are not many gods among the Bœotian sepulchers. There are men, and, above all, women and children, and even animals, toys, and obscene figures.

TANAGRA.
Draped woman
(*Bibliotheque Nationale*).

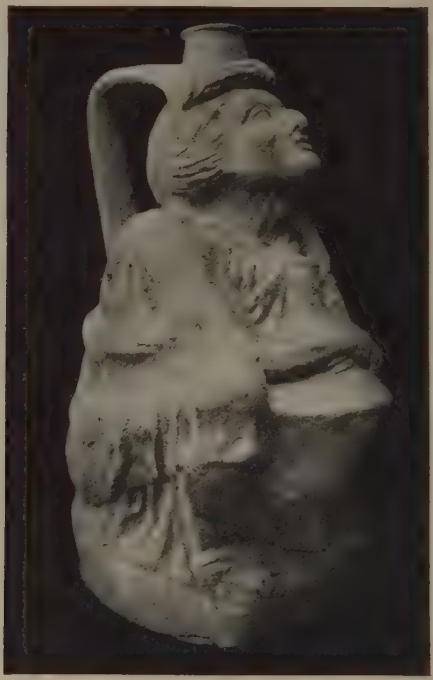
It has been said that Greek art lacked character. To assert this is to know it inadequately, and perhaps only by the calumnies which the academies, the Roman copies, and the retrospective novels have spread about it. What is character? It is the placing in evidence not of the picturesque, but of the descriptive elements of a given form. The art of the fifth century, which has been said not to have character, goes beyond individual character. It expresses the entire species, it describes it by insisting upon the dominant character of every individual. But the intimate art of Greece does not aim so high. With its charming wisdom it follows individual character.

People have forgotten the Greek portraits—so rare, it is true, but so penetrating—they have forgotten the Tanagras, the Myrinas, the vase paintings, the whole of Pompeiian painting, and those statuettes, those

TANAGRA. The toilet (*Private Collection*).

studies which perpetuate the cruel satire on the life of the sick, the hunchbacked, the lame, and the infirm of all kinds. They forget that there are even caricatures in the sepulchers of Tanagra. The popularity which the comedies of Aristophanes enjoyed is explained when we know their spectators. There was plenty of laughter in Greece, the philosophers laughed at the

gods, the people laughed at the philosophers. The coroplasts (figure makers) of Tanagra and the potters of Ceramica were wholly joyous.



Pitcher (*National Museum, Athens*).

Did they imitate the great contemporary statues as often as has been said? It is improbable. There were occasional reminiscences, at the most. Imitation, close or loose, is death. Now these things live. All the qualities of Praxitelean sculpture are in them,

and more acutely. They are modern. They will always be modern. It is because they are eternal. To make a living piece is to make something of eternity, to surprise the laws of life in their permanent dynamism.

MAGNA GRÆCIA. Girls playing with osselets, terra cotta (*British Museum*).

Walking, dances, and games; the toilet, repose, gossip, attention, revery, immobility; the fine shadings of life, its impressions, and its memories—pass into these charming things, or flee, or hesitate, or halt. They are a living crowd of unseizable moments, these candid little creatures, with their red hair and their tinted dresses. They are the flowers that Greece gathers for a crown

as she looks at herself in the water, runs under the willows, stands on tiptoe to reach the lips of the gods, and lives an animal life so ingenuous that her singers and her sculptors could not help deifying it and succeeding—as they followed its direction, without revolt and without a too laborious effort—in illumining its spirit.

These gracious creatures did not know their power of fascination. Greece loved and let herself be loved in an admirable innocence. If the grandiose sensualism of the Orient created the musical drama and inundated the sculptor of Olympia with its sacred frenzy, it did no more than graze the masses of the people and the artist-workmen who interpreted their needs. It is this that always separated Dorian and even Attic art, at least, in their average manifestations, from the art of the Greeks of the Orient. The women of Myrina, the Tanagra of Asia Minor, knew their power of love. The true soul of Asiatic Greece, ardent to the point of voluptuousness, the soul whose flame streams into the Hellenic intelligence, is in the art of Myrina, far more than in the decorative sculpture of the time. The richness of language is less disturbing in it than in the hands of the artist of Pergamos, for this little art—colorful, ardent, and impulsive—is made to be seen close by. There is not the least emphasis in this art; it is rich, almost brutal, a thing made to communicate the ardor of these beautiful, alluring women with their plump backs, their round arms, their heavy hair, their trailing dresses. They paint their questionable faces and adorn themselves and load

themselves with jewels. One thinks of Hindoo sculpture which is soon to be stirring in the shadow of the caverns, of the idols of Byzantium with the gems glittering around them; one thinks of the splendid death, in the purple of Venice, of Oriental paganism. The conquest of the Occident by the woman of Asia is on the point of completion.

TANAGRA (IV Century).
(*Museum of Chantilly.*)

II

Everywhere, between the fourth and the first century — in Italy, in Sicily, on the shores of Asia Minor—the popular and intimate art causes official art to recede. The coroplast of Myrina and of Tanagra, and the sculptor of Alexandria remains himself, whereas the decorator of the monuments tries to catch once more a soul that has gone from him—that has gone out of the world—and to reconcentrate, by artificial means, the dissociated

elements of artistic creation. At Alexandria the figurine sculptor was doubtless not a workman, as at Myrina or at Tanagra, but rather one of those very brilliant, very superficial, and very skillful, fashionable artists who swarm around the rich man. Every new social expression, it is true, calls forth an art which adapts itself to it, which is beautiful simply because of that fact. But plutocratic societies constitute only a moment of that expression, the last before the downfall. It has been said that luxury called forth the arts. We may agree. But luxury consumes art, the profound creative feeling that comes out of the people in their full efforts, as the child from the mother's womb, the feeling that has in it their will, their hope, their power of illuminating. Between the statuette of the collector and the temples of a democracy there is the distance from the shelves of the drawing-room to the Acropolis.

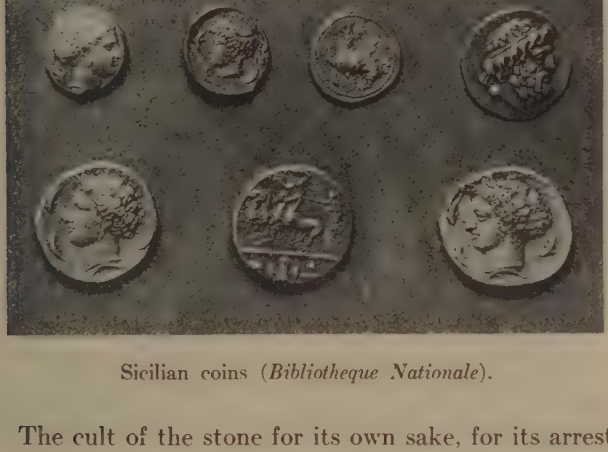
During the Alexandrian period and even more during the imperial period, the diffusion of taste crowded out creative force. When this force manifests itself it often passes for an insult to taste or, at least, to the practical and moderate idea which the ruling classes and the world of fashion conceive of the mystic function of the artist; they imagine him made to satisfy their needs. To be sure, the taste of Alexandria is delightful—at least, the taste of the intellectual aristocracy; for the parvenu, there, as in other places, cares only for anecdotal art. Alexandria loves a whispering, tremulous, suave note in its production. Delicate little bronzes are created in which the material

TANAGRA. (IV Century). (*Private Collection.*)

takes on qualities of living flesh, of warm skin; it seems to cower from the cold like the virgin bodies so obligingly described by the sensual artist, in effete epochs, for the delight of the eye and the hand of the cultivated collector. Woman no longer unveils herself, the robes are stripped from her. Aphrodite no longer emerges from the sea; she enters the bathtub. She tries the water with her toes, her young body stoops or turns or stretches itself with a perfect absence of shame, and yet remains chaste, if one thinks of Asia, which attempts a last violent effort. Doubtless also, there is a debt to Egyptian purity, which Grecian nobility recognizes and weds.

Here is the fashionable drawing-room, here are rare pieces of furniture and the glass cases in which sleep precious things, sheltered from profaning hands. Polygraphy and romance have succeeded tragedy and history. It is the period when persons of elegance, men or women, covered from head to foot with amulets and jewels, eat and drink from chiseled metal. The locust, wrought of gold and worn in the hair, no longer sufficed for ladies of fashion. They needed rings, cameos, intaglios, necklaces, bracelets, clasps, and eardrops. The jewels of gold were, in Greece at least, of simple form, for Asia and imperial Rome have more pompous taste. The metal has the suppleness of a trailing vine, it creeps like a reptile over the forms, it weds the warm creases of the neck, it encircles the splendor of the arms, it draws the eye to the beautiful hands, it marries the dull sheen of the painted skin to its own tawny pallor. Set in a bezel or suspended,

finely engraved stones bear images of the gods and portraits, birds, lions, beetles, and chimeras; there are as many amulets as there are superstitions in the epochs without faith.



Sicilian coins (*Bibliotheque Nationale*).

The cult of the stone for its own sake, for its arresting of light, was unknown to ancient art. The material must be wrought, must have imprinted in it man's idea of the universe, of himself, and of his destiny. In stone, in marble, bronze, gold, silver, ivory, wax, wood, and clay, in all the crystallizations of the earth, its bones, its flesh, its blood and its tears, the Greek of every land carved the form of his spirit. Some men have doubted the beauty of the chryselephantine sculpture of the fifth century as they have doubted the splendor which the temples of blue and gold must have taken on as they arose, under the immense Greek sky, from the forests and laurels of the acropolises and

the promontories, giving to the white marble an indescribable quality of obsolute spirituality. When they carved Athena and Zeus in ivory or gold, the Greeks wanted only to express their veneration for them. But a mind like that of Phidias could not be mistaken in the medium. Behind his brow reigned order, lyric force, and the harmonious accord between intelligence and the heart, and if he carved gods in gold and ivory it was because gold and ivory obeyed him as marble did. What difference does the material make? Whatever it is, it expresses the artist as, in the crust of the earth, coal, and the diamond mingle and express its subterranean fire. The material is poured boiling into the mold of his soul; when his soul is strong, clay is strong as bronze, and when his soul is gentle, bronze is as tender as clay.

What good stuff the world is made of! Like the skin and the wool of the beasts, like the meat of the fruits, like bread, this stuff is man's companion. It is the water and the salt. It has the docility of the domestic creatures, it welcomes the master at his threshold and at his doorstep, protects him in the walls and the roofs, offers itself for his repose, hollows itself to receive his food, reaches up to lift its fruits to his lips and strives ingeniously to yield him materials less hard than itself. There was a time, toward the end of Hellenism, when wrought material surrounded man on every hand, like a motionless procession, at once defending and exalting him. Heroic art was weakening, doubtless, but the gods of ivory and gold were intact, deep in the sanctuaries, and the

bright-painted marble heroes still inhabited the metopes where the gold of their bucklers glistened. Painted temples were everywhere, and propylæa, porticos, stadiums built of steps, colonnades, and terminal gods. The pavements of the streets were of marble, as were

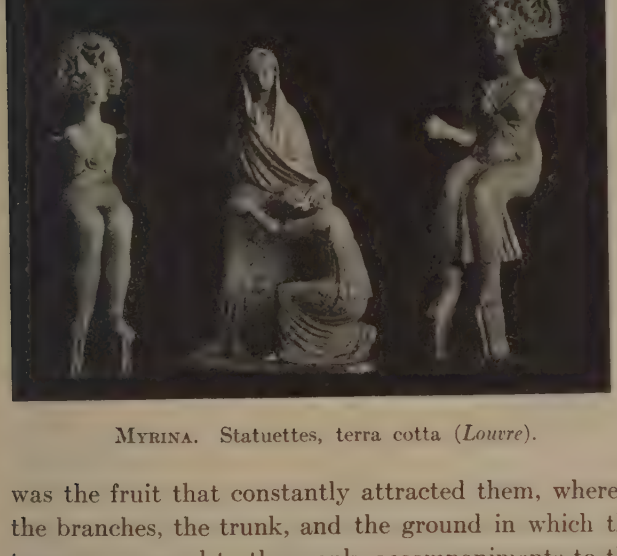
TANAGRA (IV Century). (*Private Collection.*)

the steps of the acropolises and the serene amphitheaters looking over the hills to the sea. Gold and stone, jasper, agates, amethyst, cornelian, chalcedony, and rock-crystal went into the jewels which weighed on the arms, clasped the tunics, and shone in the dyed hair. And in the houses of marble, stone, or wood, and even in the depths of the sepulchers, were seats of marble or of wood, vases of gold, of silver, of bronze, statuettes of terra cotta or of metal, pots of clay or cups of onyx.

The hollow of the hand lent its warmth to precious bits of material, the piece of gold, silver, or copper. Greece did not invent the coin, it is true, but its cities were the first to give it its circular form, to place a head on one side, a symbol on the other, and an inscription composed of watchwords, signatures, or the value. With the diffusion of wealth and æsthetic culture, the coin springs from the bronze matrices in swarms. It is made practically everywhere, in Athens, Asia, Alexandria, and in Sicily especially, in the workshops of Syracuse. Coins mount from the Hellenic hearth like a shower of sparks. The type changes with the city, the events, the victories, and the traditions. Statues, celebrated pictures, legends, myths, symbolic animals, and incisive portraits, the reliefs polished by millions of hands and shaded with black in the hollows have the look of a living material made motionless by the mint. The circle is never a perfect one, the thickness of the disk varies; there, as in other cases, the equilibrium of the elements makes of the art object a complete organism, which symmetry would kill. The metal seems forced out from within as if swelling with juice and with a soul. The Greeks give to it a life of flesh or of the plant. On silver or gold vases they carve networks of twining branches, among which seeds, buds, and leaves—of the oak, the olive tree, the laurel, the plane tree or ivy—seem to tremble. Heavy fruit buries itself in the mystery of the foliage.

It is perhaps by these vases and by many of the terra cotta figurines that we can best judge to what degree the Greeks understood the frame in which the

human figure moves. The setting was not a dominant idea with them as it was later on with the Hindoos and the men of the Renaissance—especially the Flemings and the Frenchmen of the Renaissance—because the soil of Greece was less rich in animate forms and because the Greeks looked on man as the ripe fruit; it



Myrina. Statuettes, terra cotta (*Louvre*).

was the fruit that constantly attracted them, whereas the branches, the trunk, and the ground in which the tree grew seemed to them only accompaniments to the superior melody realized by the mind. But their great tragic poets saw the mænads, dressed in tiger skins and girdled with serpents, crowned with flowers and leafy vine branches, bounding out of the forests with the panthers; they spoke of those monstrous unions from which the beast-man came, to affirm the

grand accord of indifferent nature and the mind guided by will. And the humblest of their peasants, who knew that the spring and the grotto were peopled with familiar divinities, was at peace as he felt the fraternity of his soil.

III

The Greeks introduced into their house the world of the air and the plants. The cadaver of Pompeii, a city of Magna Græcia, built and decorated by Greeks, is covered with flowers. In the inner rooms, in the markets, everywhere are garlands of flowers, fruits, and leaves; there are birds and fishes, dense, shining, fiery still-life pieces surrounding false windows and painted floors which open on perspectives of streets and squares, of architecture and streets. It is doubtless only a translated, Latinized Greece, different from classic Greece and much affected by influences of Alexandria, of Asia, and inspired above all by the sea-sky, the vegetation, the red rocks, the flame, and the wine mulled on hot coals. Theocritus was a Syracusan, it is true. But on the soil of Greece there are bas-reliefs, vase-sculptures, Tanagra groups—satyrs, nymphs, young women, dancers, divinities of the woods and torrents—around whom we hear the purling of water, the rustle of leaves, the lowing and sharp bleating of the beasts, and flutes laughing and crying in the wind. And if surrounding nature stilled her voices for a moment to let Phidias commune with himself as he wrote into the human form alone his understanding of the world, Sophocles went to sit in

the grove of Colonna, the grove of orange trees with its many crickets where the brooks ripple under the moss; Pindar, the rugged poet of the north, while journeying to the games by routes which took him to gorges and beaches, picked up on his way some formidable images, full of the sky and the ocean; Æschylus, from the top of the Acropolis of Argos, watched the night sparkle, and from the most distant past of Hellas a cool breeze was blown. Ægean art is already alive with forms of the sea. The sea wind, the water of the river, and the murmur of the foliage are witnesses to the meeting of Ulysses and Nausicaa, whom the hero compares to the stem of a palm tree. Does not Vitruvius affirm that the Doric comes from the male torso, the Ionic from the female torso?

Syrian statuette (*From Le Musee*).

In any case, this rather limited Pompeiian art, made up, as it is, of recollections and distant imitations, and due almost entirely to the brush of hired decorators and of house painters, breathes the animal and the material world, the swarming and confused world that surrounds us. How young it still is, despite the old age of the pagan civilizations; how vigorous it is with all its vague mossiness; how profound and full

of the antique soul! What persuasion there is in its power, and, on the monochrome backgrounds—red, black, green, or blue—how broad and spontaneous the stroke is, how sure, how intense in expression, and how living the form! Amors, dancers, winged geniuses, gods or goddesses, animals, forms nude, draped, or aureoled with wavy gauzes, legends, battles, and all the ancient symbolism so near the soil live again here, with a slightly gross sensualism and with the candor of the workmen who interpret, certainly, but with that calm, that almost unspoiled freshness, that virginity of life which were known only to the ancient world. The dancing forms appear half veiled, with their pure arms and pure legs continuing the pure torso, like balanced branches. The nude bodies emerge gently from the shadow, floating in their firm equilibrium. Here and there are implacable portraits with large, ardent eyes—with life in its brutal austerity, undiminished by any visible intermediary. At times, side by side with the Greek soul, and bearing a germ of academism that, fortunately, is still unconscious, there is that ardent expressiveness which, thirteen centuries later, was to characterize the awakening of Italy. It is to be seen in that "Theseus Victorious over the Minotaur," which the great Masaccio would have loved. It is an anxious, uneven world, with currents of influence running through it in every direction, but fiery and brilliant, rotten at the top, and yet ingenuous underneath.

See in these portraits the sense of immensity that is in the gaze, how the great figures are steeped in

thought, and how a tremor seems to run inward through their living immobility. This arrested life is almost terrible to look upon. One would say that it had

HELLENISTIC ART. Aphrodite, bronze statuette (*British Museum*).

been suddenly fixed, as if seized by the volcano at the same hour as the city was. Impressionism, do you say? Yes, in its fire, in its breadth, in the way in which the movement is instantaneously surprised; but however much weakened, however enervated the

voice of the artisans of a corrupt and skeptical age, this painting expresses a power of comprehension and a depth of love that only a few isolated men attain to-day. It is the only real renascence of Greek heroism. It responds, like the "Hercules of the Belvedere" and the Venuses of the valley of the Rhone, to the shock of Hellenic intelligence as it meets with Latin force and, in a flash, creates an art complete in its vigor, its ardent life, and its feverish concentration.

Although these paintings are not, properly speaking, copies (if we admit that a copy is possible and that the copyist, whether mediocre or touched with genius, does not in every case substitute his nature for that of the master), although they are only reminiscences, the transplantation of Greek works on a renewed soil, it is through them that we can get an idea—even if a distant one—of the painting of antiquity, which the crumbling of the temples has wiped out. The most celebrated frescoes of the dead city recalled the works of Polygnotus, Zeuxis, Parrhasios, and Apelles. The painting related the ancient myths and the story of the national wars. At first it knew flat colors only, very much simplified, doubtless, very brilliant and hard tones, brutal in their oppositions, before modeling appeared with Parrhasios. The lines which inclosed the powerful polychromy must have had the firmness of the uninterrupted curve which the passage of the hills to the plains and of bays to the sea taught to the men who were at this time making the gods. Always decorative in its beginnings, it undergoes the fate of the painting of modern schools, where the easel picture

appears when the statues descend from their heights on the temples to invade the public squares, apartments, and gardens. Like sculpture, this painting had to bend to the will of the rich man. But doubt-

Uræus, bronze (*Bibliotheque Nationale*).

less it retained its character better, being more supple, more a thing of shades, more individualistic, more the master of saying only what it did not want to hide. I see it, after Parrhasios, as somewhat like Venetian painting around Giorgione and Titian: ripe, warm,

autumnal, with an evanescent modeling in the colorful shadows and dazzling in the parts which stand out and which seem turned to gold by the sap from within. It is less fluid and musical, however—more massive, more compact. Oil painting has not been discovered, and the wax renders the work slower and less immaterial.

IV

In any case it has preserved until our time, through Pompeii, the perfume of the Greek soul, of which it hands on to us one of the most mysterious aspects, far better than does the art of ceramics, which has traced that soul for us in hardly anything more than its external evolution—in such matters as composition, superficial technique, and subjects. The role of ceramics is limited, with the little terra cottas, to representing the national industrial art of Greece—which is already saying a good deal. But it cannot pretend to stand for more than the reflection in the popular soul of the flowers gathered by certain minds throughout the nation.

Hundreds of workshops had been opened practically everywhere, in Athens, in Sicily, in Etruria, in Cyrenaica, in the Islands, in the Euxine, in a place as distant, even, as the Crimea. The most celebrated painters of cups, Euphronius, Brygos, and Douris, worked with their workmen, often repeated themselves, copied one another and rivaled one another in activity so as to attract patrons. Through the goodly communion of their work, through their continual exchange and emulation, they founded a pow-

POMPEII (I Century A.D.). Telephus suckled by a doe, fresco (*Naples Museum*).

erful industry. In it, as in other activities, except where Greece was dominated by Sparta, the slave collaborated with the master, whether as a farmer in the country, as a servant in the city or as an artisan in the workshop; he was, beyond all doubt, less unhappy than the feudal serfs or the wage-earner of to-day. Man was too wise, at that time, to utilize the sufferings of man for his profit; life was too simple, too near the soil, too merged with the light to take the law of hell as its model.

Industrial art, however, in spite of these powerful roots, is so limited by its very purposes, that it cannot pretend to such high intention as that of the art which governs the sculpture of the gods. On the other hand, it avoids, for a much longer time, the double snare of pretentiousness and of fashion. Thus it dies less quickly and renews itself more readily. Diderot was right in re-establishing the dignity of the industrial arts. He was wrong in placing them on the same level with the others. The sculptor, and more especially the painter, in his struggle with the material, is guided only by the quality of the material. The purpose of the object allows it to move in so wide an area that the liberty of these artists knows no other limits than those of the infinite space in which occur the relationships of intelligence and sensibility with the whole universe of sensations and images. The artisan is confined between narrower frontiers by the function of the furniture or the ornament on which he works, and also by its size. A fresco and a thimble do not offer identical means to their creators. If the

murmur of the soul can be as pure, as touching, in one as in the other, the elements of the symphony are far less numerous in the latter case, and infinitely less

POMPEII (I Century A.D.). Theseus, conqueror of the Minotaur, fresco (*Naples Museum*).

complex. And, before practical utility, spiritual utility is obliged to retreat.

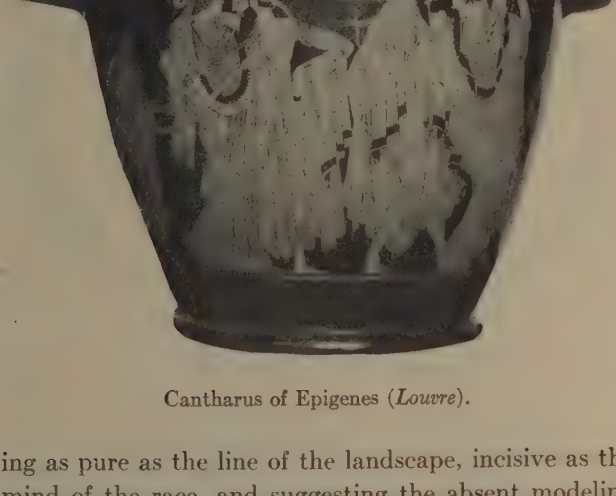
In addition, the workman must arrange, in such a way, the ornaments with which he wants to decorate the object, so that they will follow the contour of its

forms, to modify themselves according to its volume and its surfaces, and, like himself, accept a role which excludes all others and which is, even so, of an inferior

HERCULANEUM. Faun playing on pipes, fresco (*Naples Museum*).

order. And thus it is that only in very rare cases do we discover on the sides of even the most beautiful Athenian vases a hint of that logical composition which places the great sculpture on the plane of the universal. Forms elongate and become parallel to wed the flanks of the amphoras, to make them straight and to give them spring. They stretch in encircling

rings around the cups, the vases, and the bowls as if to drag the pot along in a spinning movement. Here and there, undoubtedly very often, in an ensemble at once fiery and sober, easily read at a glance, black on red or red on black, there are admirable details, draw-



Cantharus of Epigenes (*Louvre*).

ing as pure as the line of the landscape, incisive as the mind of the race, and suggesting the absent modeling by its direction alone and its manner of indicating attitude and movement. For the workman as for the sculptor of the temple, the mold of the Archaic is broken, nature is no longer a world of immutable and separate forms, but a moving world, constantly combining and disuniting itself, renewing its aspects and changing the elements of its relationships at every second.

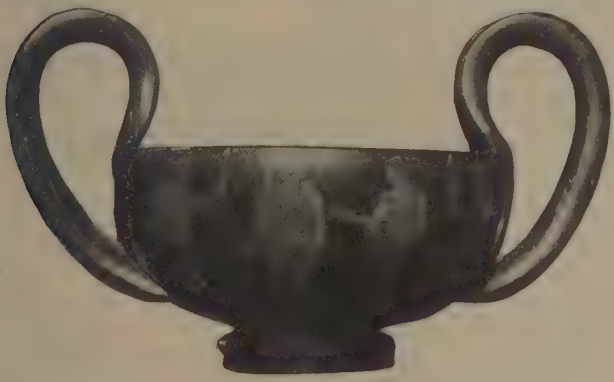
The form of these vases is so pure that one would

say it had been born unaided, that it had not come from the hands of the potters, but from the obscure and permanent play of the forces of nature. We have a vague sensation before these vases, as if the artist

Votive helmet, bronze (*Louvre*).

were obeying the hints of the wheel as he presses in or swells out the clay, thickens the paste or spreads it. When the wheel hums, when the material whirls and flies, an inner music murmurs to the moving form the mysterious fluctuation which gives songs and dances

their rhythm. Grain, breasts, round haunches, closed flowers, open flowers, twining roots, spherical forms of nature—the central mystery of them all sleeps in the still hollow of the vases. The law of universal attraction does not control the suns alone, but all matter moves and turns in the same circle. Man tries to escape from the rhythm, and rhythm always draws



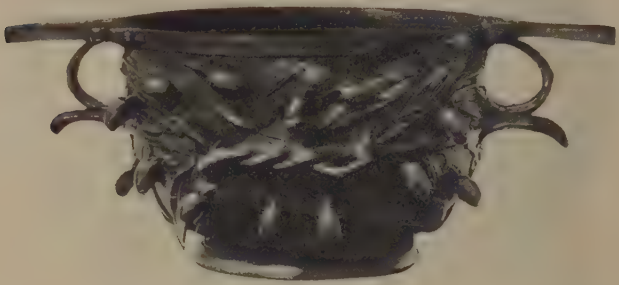
Cup of Chelis (*Louvre*).

him back again. The vase has the form of fruits, of the mother's belly, and of the plants. The sphere is the matrix and the tomb of forms. Everything comes out of it. Everything returns to it.

Save in the case of the great Panathenaic amphoras which have the severity of design proper to their use, the Greek vase almost always welcomes you with a charming sense of the intimate. When it recounts the adventures of war or interprets the old myths, it humanizes itself delightfully. Very often there are children at their

games, men in their workshop, women at their toilet, long, undulating, and rich forms indicated with a continuous line. The familiar painting of the Egyptian husbandman told of the work of the fields. The familiar painting of the Greeks, a people of traders and talkers, speaks rather of household work.

The legend of the stern heroism of every-day existence is no more born out by these vases than by the



MAGNA GRÆCIA. Olive vase, silver, Treasury of Boscoreale (*Louvre*).

Bœotian figurines. Life in the ancient city tends toward a kindly, sometimes difficult, equilibrium. The passages between its component elements are more noticeable in speech and in the written law than in reality. Southern indulgence and familiarity draw everything together. If the Greek had looked down on woman he would not have spoken of her with so much intelligent love, and if he had been harsh toward his servitor he would not have shown him thus associated with his own tasks. The child plays and goes to school, where he learns music, writing, and recita-

tion. The ephebus frequents the stadium, the men, young and old, frequent the agora, the housewife spins and sews. On feast days, the young girls, like bending reeds, like undulating water, like waving flowers and garlands, dance in long lines, making rhythmical—to the sound of the shrill music—the movements of the march, of the pursuit, of the farewell, of supplication, of prayer, of a voluptuousness unconscious of itself—a full epitome of the essential moments of our life. Passion? The Greek knew it so well that he deified it, but it was for him a food, the passage from one state of equilibrium to another; he had the intuitive feeling that the impulse of sentiment was only a means of realizing harmony.

Funerary stele (v Century B.C.). (*National Museum, Athens.*)

Ares and Aphrodite had their temples, Dionysus also, but outside of Eleusis—a veiled summit, a mysterious region where, doubtless, the unity of our desire was revealed—the three summits of Greece were the Parthenon of Athens, the sanctuary of Delphi, and the Altis of Olympia, where man came to adore Reason, Beauty, and Energy. Heroism is life accepted.

It is the progressive and never-attained realization of the conquests that life imposes on us.

Submission to destiny—therein is Greece. There are in Athens, in the little cemetery of Ceramica at the foot of the Acropolis, certain funeral steles of a moving symbolism. Greece so wanted us to love life that she expressed her desire even on the stone of the tomb. Farewells are said there with simple gestures, with slightly sad and perfectly calm faces, as if the persons were going to see each other again. Friend clasps the hand of friend, the mother touches the child's hair with her fingers, the serving maid hands to the mistress her jewel casket. The familiar animals come, to be present at the departure. The glory of terrestial life enters the subterranean shadow.

THE ROMAN CAMPAGNA.

Chapter VIII. ROME

I

UNTIL the Hellenistic period the radiance of Greece in the Mediterranean world prevented men from perceiving the civilizations which were growing up or disappearing round about her. The nation she knew best and of which she spoke most favorably was Persia, because it was the power she had to combat. The old peoples had hardly more than one means of intermingling with and comprehending one another, which was war. Now, military conquest was repugnant to the Greeks. The colonies which they had sown on all the shores of Asia, the Euxine, North Africa, southern Italy, and Sicily constituted a network of stations in their vast maritime system which was

pretty closely reserved for the nation, and beyond which everything, for them, was legends, semidarkness, and confusion. Trade scarcely got beyond the coasts of the happy seas. The interior of the lands, the mountains of the horizon, the unknown forests, with-

ETRUSCAN ART (VI Century B.C.). Sarcophagus, detail (*Villa of Pope Julius*).

held their secret from Greece, since they escaped her influence.

Hellenism has left only furtive traces outside of the Greek world, properly so-called. There was, perhaps, only one agricultural and nonmaritime people that was strongly influenced by Greece, through the cities of Magna Græcia and through the sea routes. The country that lies between the Arno, the Tiber, the

Apennines, and the sea was probably the only one of the old world to accept, without resistance, and from the heroic period onward, the supremacy of the Greek spirit. The Etruscans, like the Greeks, were doubtless descended from the old Pelasgians, and recognized in the products brought them by the ships—vases especially, which they bought in large quantities—the encouragement of an effort related to their own. In fact the most original manifestations of their art always owe something to Greece and, certainly by intermediation of the latter, to Assyria and to Egypt.

In time, undoubtedly, if Rome had not come to crush the germ of Etruscan genius, the latter would have profited by the decline of Greece, for the realization of itself through contact with its soil. It is a rugged land of torrents, forests, and mountains, well drawn and well defined. But the Etruscan peasant, bent over his furrow, in his landscape where the eye is constantly arrested by the hills, did not have the free horizon that opened before the man of Greece trafficking among the bays and islands, or tending his sheep on the heights. Hence, there is in Etruscan art something funereal, violent, and bitter.

The priest reigns. Forms are inclosed in tombs. In the sculpture of the sarcophagi we frequently find two strange figures leaning on their elbows with the stiffness and the mechanical expression known to all archaisms—the lower part of their bodies unconnected with the secret and smiling upper part; the frescos of the funerary chambers tell a tale of sacrifices and killings; the whole art is fanatical, superstitious, and

agitated. The myth and the technique often come from the Greeks. But we seem to have something here which resembles more the hell which the Pisan primitives are to paint, twenty centuries later, on the walls of the Campo Santo, than it does the harmonies

Etruscan Art. Tomb of the Augurs, fresco, detail (*Corneto Tarquinia*).

of Zeuxis. Tuscan genius is already piercing through, underneath these bizarre, over-elongated, and somewhat sickly forms, wherein the vigor and elegance of the race fail to overcome the enervated mysticism. None the less a strange force, a mysterious life wells up in them. These somber frescos look like the shadows which one might trace on a wall. An all-powerful decorative genius reveals itself in them, an equilibrium constantly pursued and given style to

by the visible symmetry of the ritual gestures, of the flight of birds, of the branches, the leaves, and the flowers. It seems a kind of dance, caught in the instant of its most fleeting rhythm.

Etruria, as the educator of Rome, was the intermediary step of civilization on its march from the

Etruscan Art. Cinerary urn (*Perugia*).

East to the West. The material remains of the Roman Republic teach us, perhaps, more about the genius of the Etruscans than about that of the founders of the city. The vault, which the Pelasgians brought from Asia, and which their Ægean descendants gave to primitive Greece, is transmitted to Rome by their Italic descendants in Italy. The Roman arch of

triumph is only a modified Etruscan gate. Rome had the "Cloaca Maxima" built by architects from Etruria, and it forms the intestines of the city, the vital organ around which its profound materialism is to install itself, to grow little by little and extend its arms of stone over the whole of the ancient world. The Etruscan, from the sixth century onward, not only brings to Rome his religion and his science of augury, he digs the sewers, builds the temples, erects the first statues; he forges the arms by which Rome is to reduce him to subjection. He casts bronze, and his bronzes, in which he reveals his genius for uncompromising expression, have a bitter force that is as rugged and hard as the oak clumps of the Apennines. The symbol of Rome, the rough she-wolf of the Capitol, was made by an old Tuscan bronze worker.

II

From her beginnings Rome is herself. She diverts to her profit the moral sources of the old world as she diverts the waters of the mountains to bring them inside her walls. The source once captured, her avidity exhausts it, and she goes on farther to capture another. At the beginning of the third century Etruria has been crushed by Rome, and her blood and nerves have been mingled with those of the Latins and the Sabines. And this is the cement which holds together the block on which Rome is to support herself, to spread over the world the concentric circles of her vital effort. All the resistance she encounters,

ETRUSCAN ART. Fresco (*Corneto Tarquinia*).

Pyrrhus, Carthage, and Hannibal, will be to her only so many instruments for cultivating her will and for increasing it. The legions progress like the regular deposit of a river.

If Roman positivism had not pressed the Latin and Etruscan together, one asks, as one reads Plautus, Lucretius, Vergil, and Juvenal, what art could have realized this rough synthesis of the Italic peoples, with their love of woods and gardens, their genius, as bitter as the leaves of their trees, and as rich as their plow-lands? But the Roman was bent too much on external conquests to conquer all his own vigor and harshness. As long as war continued methodically —five or six centuries—he had not the time to express himself. As soon as the springs relaxed, the mind of conquered Greece upset the whole mechanism. Mummius, after the sack of Corinth, said to the contractors charged with getting the spoil to Rome: "I warn you that if you break those statues you will have to make new ones to replace them."

Such a misunderstanding of the higher role of the work of art has about it something sacred. A candor is revealed therein from which a people may expect everything, if it is also the characteristic of that people's viewing of life. For Rome it would have been salvation, if she had refused the masterpieces which the Consul sent to her. But she accepted them eagerly, she had others sent, and still others; she devastated Greece, and her hard spirit wore itself down on that diamond.

We have, in this, one of the fatalities of history, and

the proof of the tendency in the ensemble of human societies to seek its equilibrium. Subjected materially, a people of superior culture morally subjects the people that conquered it. Chaldea imposed its mind on

ETRUSCAN ART. She-wolf (*Museum of the Capitol*).

Assyria, Assyria and Ionian Greece did the same with Persia, Greece transforms the Dorian. Rome wants to please Greece as the parvenu does the aristocrat, Greece wants to please Rome as the weak does the strong. In this contact Greece can no longer prostitute a genius which had long since escaped from her; but Rome loses part of her own genius.

The Roman, in his manners, his temperament, his religion, his whole moral substance, differed totally from the Greek. In the case of the latter we have a simple, free, investigating life, given over completely

to realizing the inner harmony which a charming imagination pursues along every path. In the case of the Roman, life is disciplined, egoistic, hard, and firm; it seeks its nutriment outside of itself. The

Bust of Tiberius, bronze
(*National Museum, Rome*).

Greek makes the city in the image of the world. The Roman wants to make the world in the image of the city. The true religion of the Roman is the hearth, and the chief of the hearth is the father. The official cult is purely decorative. The divinities are concrete

Claudius (I Century A.D.). (*Louvre.*)

things, fixed, positive, without connection, without harmonious envelope, one personified fact beside another personified fact. They belong to a domain apart and, in reality, quite secondary. On one side divine right and religion, on the other human right and jurisprudence. It is the contrary of Greece where the passage is an insensible one from man to god, from the real to the possible. The Greek ideal is diversity and continuity in the vast harmonic ensemble of actions and reactions. The Roman ideal is the artificial union of these isolated elements in a stiff and hard ensemble. If the art of this people is not utilitarian, it is certain to be conventional.

Why should Rome take the elements of these formal conventions from others than Greece, who offered them to her? There are to be, indeed, attempts at transformation, and even her instinct is to rebel confusedly. In spite of itself, against itself, a people is itself. The Greek temple cannot be transported to Rome, like the statues and the paintings, and when the Roman architect returns from Athens, from Sicily, or from Pæstum, he has had the time on his journey unconsciously to transform the science he has brought back from those places. The column becomes thick and smooth, often useless, placed against the wall in the guise of an ornament. If the Corinthian order dominates, the Doric and Ionic transformed, make frequent appearances, often mingling or superposing themselves in the same monument. The temple, almost always larger than in Greece, loses its animation. It is voluntarily symmetrical, massive, heavy, positive.

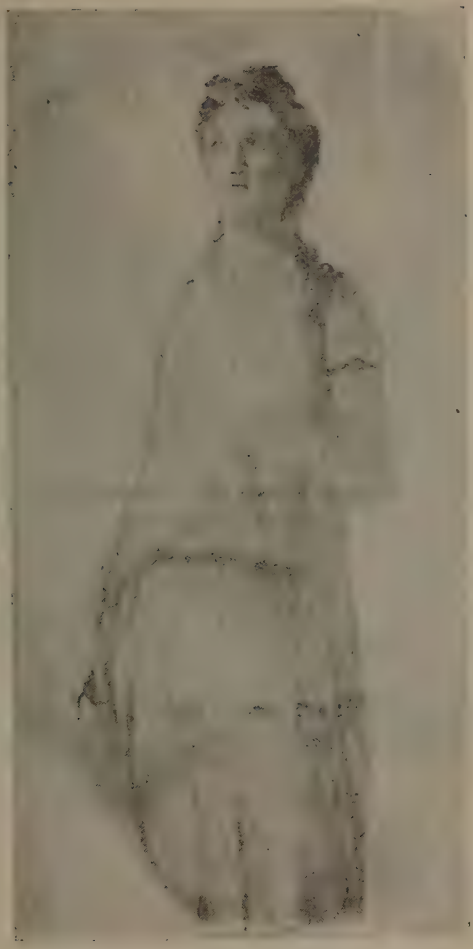
Outside of Rome—in Gaul, in Greece, in Asia especially, Rome constructs formidable temples, resplendent with force and sunlight, on which the high plant growth

GRECO-ROMAN ART. Wrestler, bronze (*Louvre*).

of the Corinthian looks like living trees cemented into the wall. But buildings like these are rare on Italian soil. In them, doubtless, Rome only played her habitual part of severe administrator. The temples of Hellenic Gaul are Greek, the temples of Asia have the sumptuousness and the redoubtable grandeur of every-

thing that rises above this mystic, feverish soil, saturated with rottenness and heat, and for which time does not count. Everywhere, for the utilitarian monuments even—for the arenas of Provence (to cite no more than these) present themselves with a discretion, a grace, an unstudied elegance which one does not find in those of Italy—everywhere the native soil imposes on Rome its collaboration and, sometimes, its domination. In ornament, for example, we find among the Greeks, the Asiatics, the Africans, or the Spaniards working under the Roman constructor, the silent insurrection of personal sentiment. Certain Gallo-Roman bas-reliefs, by their savor and their verve, by the blithe vigor with which the stone is attacked, by the concrete and perhaps slightly bantering tenderness of their accent, immediately make one think of the leaves, the fruits, the garlands, and the figures which, ten centuries later, are to adorn the capitals, the porches, and the façades of the French cathedrals. It is only in the general ordonnance of the edifice that the Roman retains his rights.

The Greeks variegated their monuments with ocher and vermilion, blue, green, and gold; the building shone in the light. How should the Roman understand polychromy? Painting has something mobile and fugitive about it, something almost aerial, which is repellent to his genius. He sees it already paling and wearing off from the marbles of the Acropolis. Therefore, he incorporates it in the material, he makes a temple wherein multicolored marbles, simple or veined, alternate with granites, porphyries, and basalts.



GRECO-ROMAN ART. Bacchante, fresco
(*Museum of the Vatican*).

Harmony scarcely counts; the color is to change no more.

III

The same transformation everywhere—in painting, in sculpture. The copy, even when conscientious, is

Tomb of Cecilia Metella (I Century B.C.).

always unfaithful. It is made heavy, pasty, and laborious; it is dead. The Greek statue maker, working in Rome, sometimes has beautiful awakenings, but he obeys the fashion—now he is classical, now decadent, now archaistic. As to the Roman statue maker, his work is to manufacture for the collector

innumerable replicas of the statues of the great period of Athens. It is the second step in that academism from which the modern world is still suffering. The first dated from those pupils of Polycleitus, of Myron,

The Pont du Gard (19 B.C.).

of Phidias, and of Praxiteles who knew their trade too well.

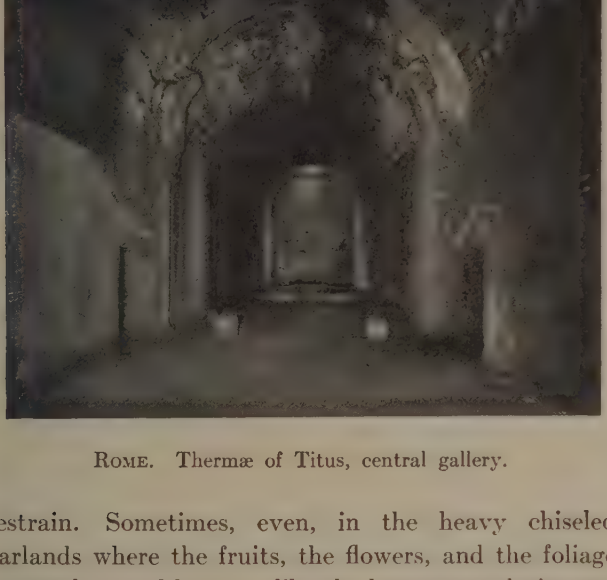
Rome encumbers itself with statues. There are the dead and the living. All those who have held public office, high or low, want to have under their eyes the material and durable witness of the fact. Far more, each one, if he can pay for it, wants to know in advance the effect that will be produced by the trough of marble in which he is to be laid away. It is not only the Imperator who is to see his military life made illustrious in the marble of the triumphal arches and

columns. The centurion and the tribune surely have, in their public life, some high deed to hand down for the admiration of the future. The sculptors of the sarcophagi devise the anecdotal bas-relief. Historical "genre," that special form of artistic degeneration, which at all times has so comfortably kept house with

Rome (1 Century A.D.). The Colosseum. Interior of the arena.

academism, is invented. The great aim is to find and relate as many heroic deeds as possible in the life of the great man. On five or six meters of marble adventures are heaped up, personages, insignia, weapons, and fasces are squeezed in. Everything is episodic, and one seizes nothing of the episode; whereas in the sober Greek bas-relief where nothing was episodic, the whole signification of the scene appeared at a glance. And yet it is, above all, in these bas-reliefs

that the harsh Roman genius has left its trace. There is very often a kind of somber force and a solemnity there which affect us sharply, carrying with them a train of crushing memories—the laurels, the lictors, the consular purple. In these bas-reliefs there bursts forth a barbarous power which no education can

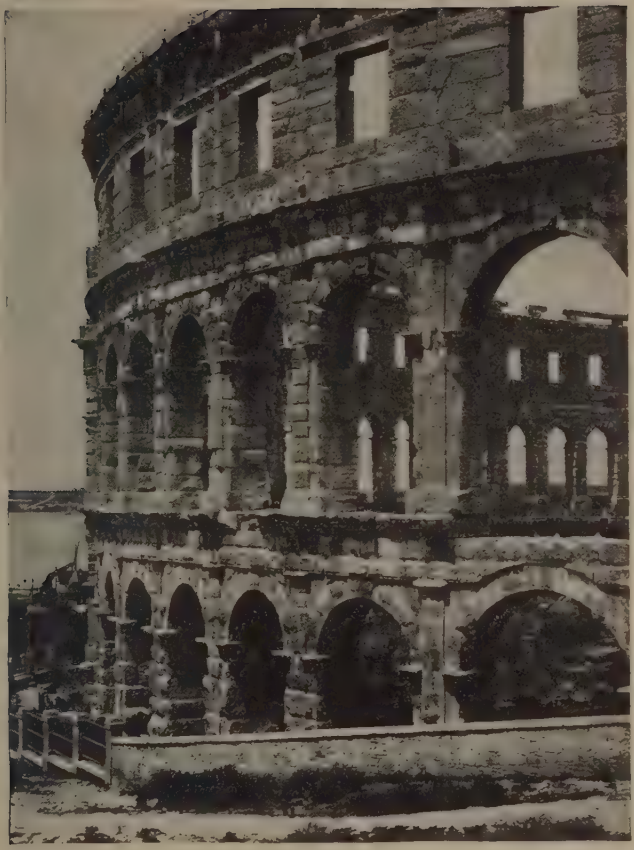


ROME. Thermæ of Titus, central gallery.

restrain. Sometimes, even, in the heavy chiseled garlands where the fruits, the flowers, and the foliage accumulate and heap up like the harvests and vintages of the strong Latin Campagna, one feels the mounting of the rustic sap which Rome could not dry up and which swells in the poems of Lucretius as in an old tree that sends out green shoots again. Then the Greeks are forgotten, and the sculptors from Athens

must laugh in pity before these confused poems to the riches of the earth. And doubtless they prefer the heavy imitations of themselves that are made. There are no more empty places, to be sure, no more silent passages, no longer any wave of uniting volumes that reply to one another in their constant need for musical equilibrium. But it is a disciplined orgy, even so, whose opulence is an element to be incorporated with the intoxication of the flesh rather than inscribed in the mind. The landscape background of the Roman, on the whole, affirms itself as less stylized, doubtless, but more moving and sensual than the Greek setting. One hears the crunch of the vintagers' feet on the grapes, the oak offers armfuls of firm acorns and black leaves, the ears of wheat loaded with grains group themselves into thick sheaves, we smell the floating perfume of green boughs and the odor of the plowed soil —and the richness and density of all this sculpture are due, probably, to workmen only. In the production of the official statue maker, on the contrary, a violent confusion reigns, monotonous ennui and immobility.

Such a spirit is entirely foreign to man, it is devoted entirely to glorifying beings, things, and abstractions toward which man is not drawn by his true nature, but by prejudice, or the cult of the moment. And it was to this spirit that allegory owed the favor which it enjoyed under Roman academism. The great artist does not love allegory. If it is imposed on him, he dominates it, he drowns it in form, drawing from form itself the sense that is always in it. Allegory, on the



Pola (1 Century A.D.). The Arena, detail.

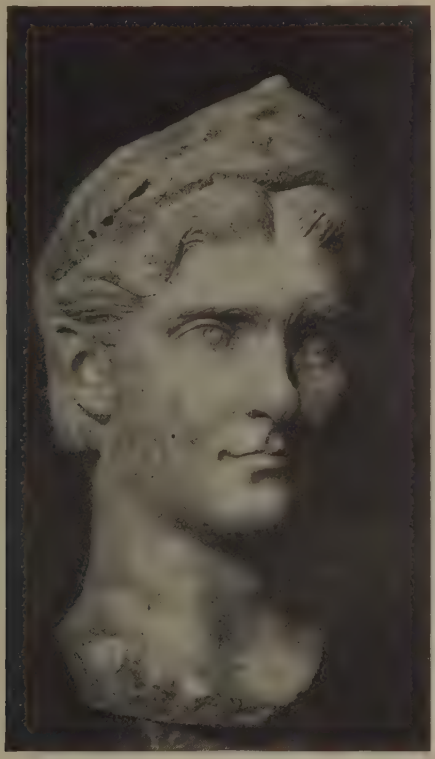
other hand, dominates the false artist, to whom form says nothing. Allegory is the caricature of the symbol. The symbol is the living visage of the realized abstraction; allegory has to mark the presence of the abstraction by external attributes.

These cold academic studies, these mannikins of

Sarcophagus of Julius Bassus (*Vatican*).

bronze and of marble, these frozen gestures—always the same—these oratorical or martial attitudes which knew no change, these rolls of papyrus, these draperies, these tridents, lightnings, and horns of plenty crowded themselves, heavy and tiresome, into all the public places, into forums, squares, and sanctuaries. Sarcophagi and statues were made in advance; the orator dressed in his toga, the general in his cuirass, the tribune, the quæstor, the consul, the senator, or the

imperator, could be supplied at any time. The body was interchangeable. The head was screwed on to



The wife of Trajan (*British Museum*).

the shoulders. To recognize the personage one had to look at the face, which would sometimes be placed too high to be distinguishable. It was the only thing that did not have the appearance of having come from

the factory. It alone responded to a need for truth, an obscure and material need, but a sincere one. It was made only after the order had been given and from the person who ordered it; thereafter, the artist and the model collaborated honestly.

There is something implacable about all these Roman portraits. There is no convention, but also no fantasy. Man or woman, emperor or noble, the model is followed feature by feature, from the bone-structure of the face to the grain of the skin, from the form of the hair dressing to the irregularities of the noses and the brutality of the mouths. The marble cutter is attentive, diligent, and of complete probity. He does not think even of emphasizing the descriptive elements of the model's face, he wants to make it a *likeness*. There is not the least attempt at generalizing, no attempt at lies or flattery or satire—no concern with psychology and little character, in the descriptive sense of the word. There is less of penetration than of care for exactitude. If the artist does not lie, neither does the model. These are historical documents, from the real Cæsars of Rome to the adventurers of Spain or of Asia, from deified monsters to Stoic emperors. Where is the classic type of the "profile like a medal" in these heads? They may be heavy or delicate, square, sharp-featured, or round, at times dreamy, often wicked, but they are always true, whether puffed-up play actors, slightly foolish idealists, wholly incurable brutes, weather-beaten old centurions, or crowned hetairæ who are not even pretty. Some of these heads, certainly, through their

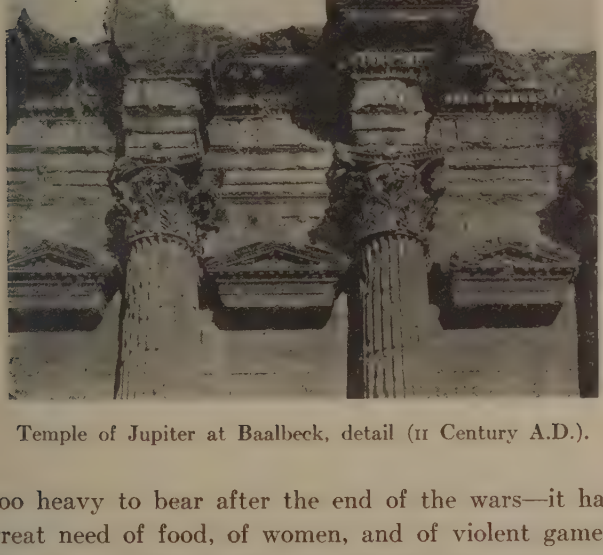
Segovia (II Century A.D.). Aqueduct.

quality of attention, and the intensity with which life concentrates in them, by their density and mass, by the pitiless pursuit of the profound modeling which the bone structure of the interrogated face possesses by chance and reveals to the sculptor, are of a powerful beauty. In the statue of the Great Vestal, for example, immediate truth attains the stage of typical truth: then the whole of Rome, with its domination of itself, and the weight it laid on the world, appears in this strong and grave woman; it is as solid as the citadel, as safe as the hearth, without humanity, without tenderness, and without weakness, until the day when slowly, deeply, irresistibly, it is to have plowed its furrow.

IV

We must turn our back on the temples, give scarcely a glance to the massive arches and columns of triumph. Around them the brutal mounting of the processions lifts the power of Rome to an empyrean no higher than their summit. The Rome, which wanted to be and believed itself to be an artist, put the whole of its native genius into the marble portraits and into certain bas-reliefs of startling authority and ruggedness. To find this genius again in more characteristic and disproportionately imposing manifestations, we must leave the domain of art, properly so-called, of that superior function whose role is to exalt all the higher activities of the intelligence and of love. We must consider the expressions of Rome's positive and materialistic daily life. Rome had no other moral need

than that of proclaiming her external glory, and any monument sufficed for that, provided it was graced with the name of temple, arch of triumph, rostrum, or trophy. But Rome had great needs in matters of health, physical strength, and, later on—in order to pour out this health and strength which had grown



Temple of Jupiter at Baalbeck, detail (II Century A.D.).

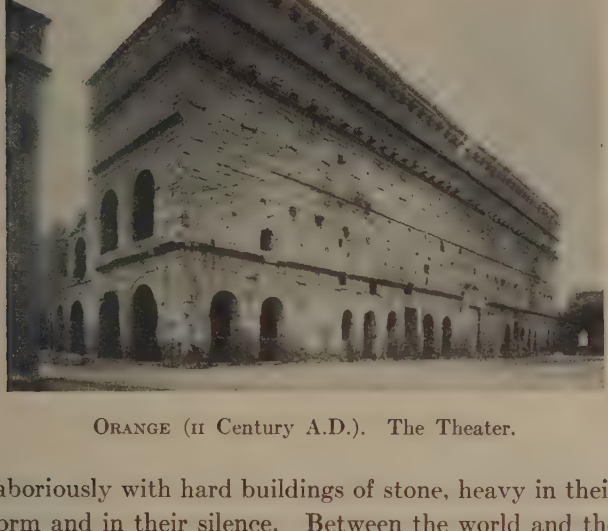
too heavy to bear after the end of the wars—it had great need of food, of women, and of violent games. Hence the paved roads, the bridges, and aqueducts at first, and afterwards the theaters, the baths, and the circuses—blood and meat after travel and water.

The Roman ideal throughout history has the uniformity and the constancy of an administrative regulation. In Rome the real artist is the engineer, as

the true poet is the historian and the true philosopher is the jurist. The Roman imposes on the family, on society, and on nature the form of his will. He represses his instinct for rapine; by living on himself he acquires the moral vigor necessary to conquer the earth; he escapes from his arid surroundings by reaching out with his tentacles of stone to the ends of the world. He plans the whole of his work—his law, his annals, and his roads, with one paving stone after the other, just as, starting from Rome, he extends over the plains, the mountains, and the sea, circle after circle of his domination.

The pride of this people and its strength were the sites where it dwelt—a few low hills amid the marshes, from which the inhabitants of the Sabine heights and the plowman of Latium flee. There is neither bread nor water, the view is closed by a distant circle of hostile mountains. It is a refuge of pariahs, but of violent and voracious pariahs who know that there are fat lands, rich cities, and herds behind the horizon. Cost what it may, they must break through the accursed circle. The race is to draw its strength from the mountain springs which rigid paths of stone are to spread in torrents over Rome. Rigid lines of stone are to direct that force across the dry marshes, across the open forests, the rivers, solitudes, and mountains, to the light of the south and the mists of the north. Cement binds the stones and the slabs of the pavement, making of them a single, continuous block, from the center of the inhabited world to its boundaries. Blood starts from the heart. Rome is in the whole

empire, the whole empire is in Rome. The ancient world is an immense oasis of woods, of plowed lands, of opulent cities, and fecund oceans; Rome is a mass of walls and huts, a surge, black and low, of the dens of the people; its noise never ceases, it crowns itself



ORANGE (II Century A.D.). The Theater.

laboriously with hard buildings of stone, heavy in their form and in their silence. Between the world and the city lies a mournful desert crossed by rigid arteries; as far as the circle of the horizon, it is a sad tract of country, undulating like a sea under the sun or the night.

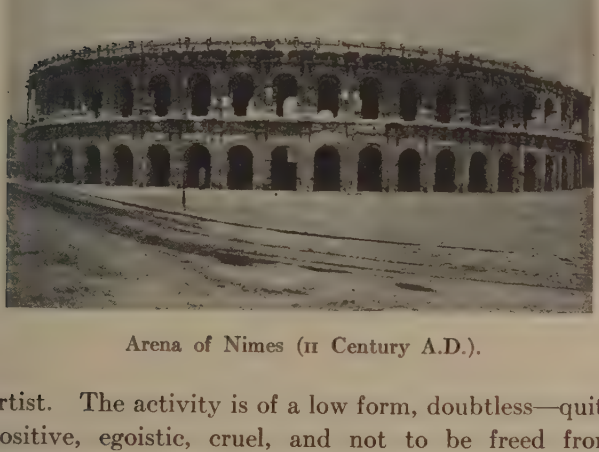
Thus to weld this isolated city to the rest of the world, materially and morally, an enormous pride was needed, an enormous energy, and enormous works that increased this energy, exalted this pride, and

incited it to undertake works still more enormous. Under the Empire the tendency toward the enormous quickens till it becomes a wild pace. More aqueducts, bridges, and roads, more stones beside stones. With Asia subjected and peace imposed, the thirst for pleasure and the freedom needed for it made their entry into Rome. The city gives itself up to enjoyment with all the strength it had devoted to conquest and authority. The enormous is in demand more and more—in play, in love, in idleness, as in war, law, history, and the construction of the city. Rome is no longer content to make the pulsations of its heart felt to the limits of her empire, she is not to rest until she has brought the material of the empire back to herself. Men of all races congest her streets, bringing with them their manners, their gods, and their soil. "The climates are conquered, nature is subjected; the African giraffe and the Indian elephant walk about Rome under a movable forest; vessels fight on land."[1] After the aqueducts and the roads, amphitheaters are constructed, circuses in which armies kill each other, where eighty thousand Romans can see all the beasts of the desert, forest, and mountain let loose upon men, while pools of hot blood dampen the blood already clotted. Thermæ are built with tanks in which three thousand persons can bathe at ease, immense tepidariums, promenades with monstrous vaults, where the idler passes his day amid women, dancers, musicians, rhetoricians, sophists, and statues brought from Greece. But the soul of Greece did not enter with

[1] Michelet, *Histoire Romaine.*

them. The Greek, even to the days of his saddest decline, loved these forms for themselves. The Roman sees in them a fit frame for his orgy of the flesh, of blood, of streaming waters. He plunges with frenzy into his heavy sensuality.

But in that, at least, without knowing it, he is an



Arena of Nimes (II Century A.D.).

artist. The activity is of a low form, doubtless—quite positive, egoistic, cruel, and not to be freed from materialism. But the organization it calls forth is so powerfully adapted to it, that it thereby acquires a crushing, rare, direct, and monotonous splendor. Thus in all cases, at the bottom of the scale as at the top, on the lowest step of the temple as in its pediment, in the material as in the moral order, the beautiful and the useful mysteriously agree.

The official religious architecture is flooded with ornaments, quadrigas, bas-reliefs, allegories, and false

columns. The Corinthian column which, with the leaves of its capital crushed by the entablature, was so illogical that the Greeks hardly ever used it, seems invented to permit the Romans to display, in stupefying contrast, the lack of artistic intelligence of those among them who were intrusted with preserving the city of art. As soon as they use ornament, their architecture loses its beauty, because it loses its logic. And the same error occurs every time they aim at effect before considering function. Here are silver cups of the Romans, their bowls cluttered with chiseled forms. One can scarcely drink from them. A lover of enjoyment and the positive life, the Roman goes astray when he approaches speculation, the general idea, the symbol. As soon as it is a question of satisfying his material instincts, he says admirable things.

There are no ornaments on his aqueducts, his bridges, or his thermæ, very few on his amphitheaters, and these are, with those positive portraits, his only real works of art. Bare, straight, categorical, accepting their role, they present to us their terrible walls, piles of matter gilded by the southern fire, crackled and whitened by the frosts of the north. They present their aërial vaults on cyclopean pillars, the lines of giant arches bestriding the valleys and the swamps, bursting through rocky barriers or sealing them—as sure, in their vertical rise or their progression, as cliffs or as herds of primitive monsters. The goal toward which they aim gives them a look of implacability. They have the inflexibility of mathematics, the force of the will, the authority of pride.

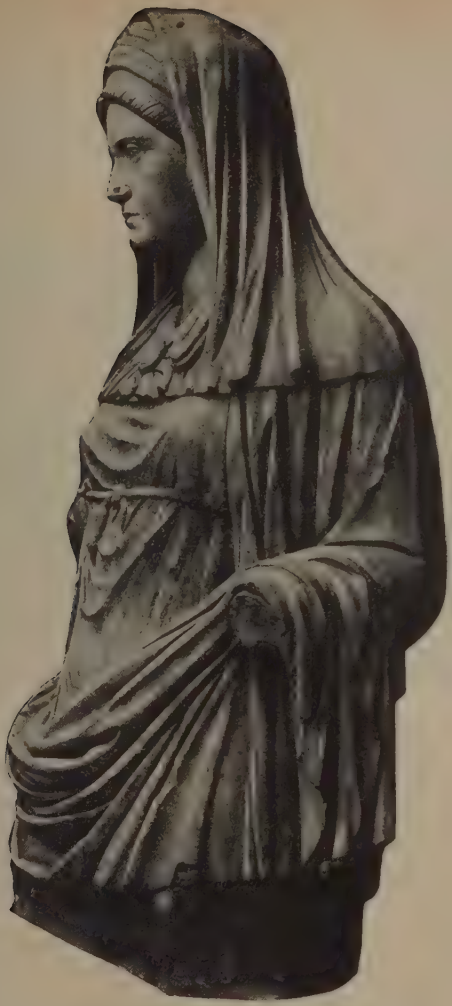
They have the lightness of the foliage that quivers at the top of the trees, sixty feet above the ground. The arch, the vaults of various kinds, the corridors, and the cupolas, a thousand blocks of granite are, for

ROME. Antonine column (II Century A.D.). Execution of the Germanic chiefs, detail.

twenty centuries, suspended in the air like leaves. They cannot crumble before the infiltration of water and the assault of the winds and the sun have uprooted their trunks; they have an air of being natural growths which would outlast all winters. To petrify the depth of the azure, the depth of the tree top! It needed the imagination of man to realize the miracle of offering to the crowds, as their perpetual shelter, the curves which bent over the curve of the earth. It needed the audacity of man to suspend matter in space by

its own weight, to stick stones to one another by leaving so little space between them that they cannot fall, to check their tendency to separate by thickening the pillars that bear them, until a point of absolute solidity is reached.

The higher it is, the straighter it is; the barer, the denser; the less of light, the fewer openings and empty spaces it offers, the better the wall presents, on the smiling or dramatic face of the soil, the image of will, of energy, of continuity in effort. The Roman wall is one of the great things of history. And, as it is Might, it is Right. It seems to be uninterrupted, it holds forever, even when split and fissured. The fall of a thousand stones does not shake it. For ten centuries all the houses of Rome were built of the stones of the Colosseum. The Colosseum has not changed its form. The Roman wall remains identical with itself everywhere. The pavement of the roads, which for two hundred leagues pursues its rigid march, is only a wall lying on the earth to embrace it and enslave it. The arch of the bridges, which is only a wall bent like the wood of a bow, draws taut the passive bowstring of the rivers. The wall of the aqueducts, hollowed out like the beds of the rivers themselves, carried their waters in a straight line wherever the ædile wants them to go. High and bare, the outer wall of the theater prevents those whose appetite or rebellion is to be overcome from peering into the free expanse of the horizon. The wall of the circuses, continuous and compact as a circle of bronze, incloses the bloody orgy within the geometrical rigor of a law.



The Great Vestal (III Century A.D.).
(*National Museum, Rome.*)

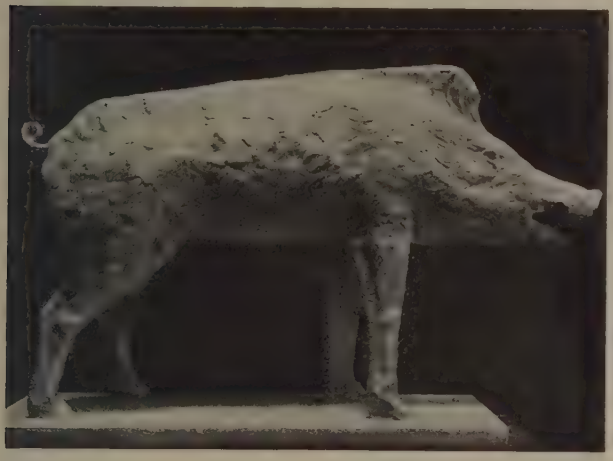
The wall that rounds itself over the tepidarium and the swimming pools, with the docility of an atmosphere kept within in its spherical boundaries by the gravitation of the heavens, confers on voluptuousness and hygiene the grand authority of a natural order.

It was in Rome that the Pelasgic poem of the wall, developed so sensitively and wisely by the Greeks

Vase from the Treasury of Bernay, silver (*Bibliotheque Nationale*).

and the Etruscans, found its most powerful and durable expressions. It was in Rome that the applications of the Asiatic vault were the most various, its use the most frequent, its employment the most methodical. The vault, in Chaldea and in Assyria, had lengthened itself out, weighed down on the palaces and houses or swelled above them, and hung over the cities. In Rome it is the very base of every utilitarian construction, and the greater part of the architectonic forms

derive from its presence—the arches of the bridges, the portals, the corridors around the circuses, the immensity of the halls made possible by the might of the walls, the power of the supports, required by the height of the edifice, the circular monuments—



GALLO-ROMAN ART (beginning of the III Century). Wild Boar (*Museum of Orleans*).

images of the horizon, of the plains bearing the cupola of the sky.

The Tombs of Cecilia Metella, the Mole of Hadrian, and the Pantheon of Agrippa especially, are epitomes of the force of Rome and of the severe and savage ring of hills, the circus in the center of which it is built. It is a sad power that it possesses; the full walls are as rough as the hide of a monster, the interior is as secret and jealous as the soul of this people,

which did not consent to manifest itself before having stripped from every other people the right to discuss that soul. The thing weighs on the crust of the earth and seems to emanate from it. At the top of the Pantheon a circular opening lets in the light of heaven. It falls as if regretfully, and never succeeds in illuminating the farther corners. Rome is self-willed and closed.

It is only into the stone circuses that the sun entered in a flood, to light up the spectacles which the tamed world gave to Rome while it waited till it should gather up in the city its hatred, revolt, and thirst for purification. *Panem et Circenses!* The Colosseum is nothing but the formula in stone of the monstrous needs of the king-people. The patrician no longer has war at his command to occupy the plebeian. Here is bread—here are circuses, in which a whole city can be seated and which are built in such a way that from each of the seats one can witness the death struggle of that city. Never has there been seen under the heavens a theater better arranged for presenting the spectacle of a suicide than that one.

The equilibrium of Rome had not the spontaneous and philosophic character of the equilibrium of Athens, and this does not result so much from the multiform extent of the Roman Empire as from the depth of its moral anarchy. Greece, while at war with Persia, was much nearer to harmony than Rome was at the very hour when she decreed peace. Her repose, her art, her pleasure, even, were of an administrative order. The struggle of interests, the rivalry of classes, and the social disorder continued from the early days of

GALLO-ROMAN ART. Altar (*Church of Verecourt*).

the Republic to the triumph of Christianity. Throughout Roman history the poor man struggles against the rich man, who holds him, first by war, then by games. But below the poor man there was a more miserable being who rarely saw the games, save as an actor in them. This was the slave, the dark rumbling of Suburra and the Catacombs, and woman, another slave, outraged every day and by all, in her flesh and in her tenderness. The being who lives in the shadows ceaselessly calls upon the sun to rise within him. The mystic tide of the poor, the tide born of Hellenic scepticism was mounting and was to submerge Roman materialism. Rome did not dream, doubtless, that the day on which she broke the frightful resistance of the little Jewish people marked the beginning of the victory of the little Jewish people over herself. It was in the law of things that the soul of the ancient world, compressed by Rome, should flow back into the soul of Rome. The patricians had been dominated by the Greek ideal; the plebeians, in their turn, were dominated by the Jewish ideal.

The church was to be built on this hard stone, and the rich man was again to enslave the poor man by giving him the promise, or the simulacrum, of the well-being to which he laid claim. Rome, by becoming Christian, did not cease to be herself; as she had remained Rome when she thought she had become Hellenistic. The apostles had already veiled the face of Christ. Rome had no trouble in casting the feeling of the masses in the mold of her will to launch them anew upon the conquest of the earth. Her material

desire for world-empire was to reawaken upon coming into contact with the dream of universal moral communion, which Christianity, after far-away Buddhism, implanted in the souls of men; and it was to transform this dream to its profit. Julian the Apostate, the last hero who appeared on the dark earth before the fall of the sun, thought he was combating the religion of

Cinerary urn (*National Museum, Rome*).

Asia. It was already against Rome that he was struggling, and Rome had the habit of conquering. The men of the north, flood after flood, may descend toward the Mediterranean, the great mirror of the divine figures, the inexhaustible basin of rays to which all the ancient peoples came to draw up light. Rome, buried under incessant human waves for more than a thousand years, is to remain Rome, and when she reappears at the head of the peoples, the peoples are to perceive that they are marked with her imprint.

GALLO-ROMAN ART (I Century A.D.).
Altar of Jupiter (*Cluny Museum*).

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[1] The names of the artists who are directly in question are printed in Italics.

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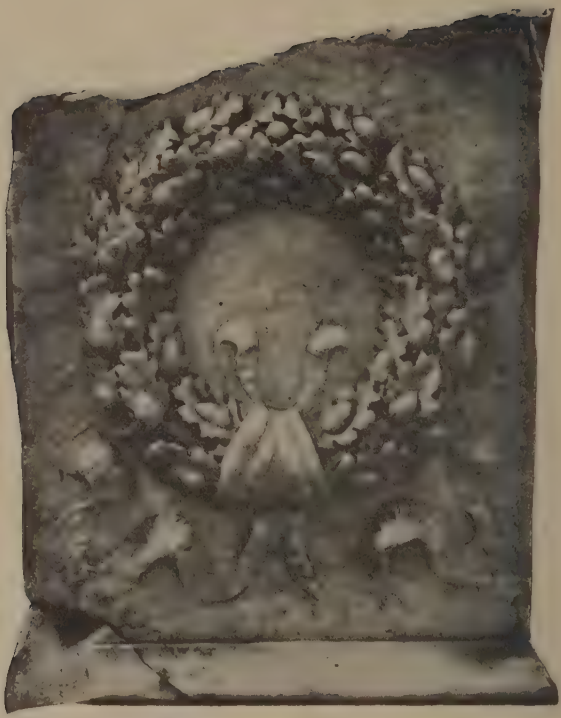
SYNOPTIC TABLES



Roman altar (*Museum of Arles*).

SIGNS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Employed in the synoptic tables

a. Architect.	Sp. Spain.	A. Attic School.
s. Sculptor.	Af. Africa.	Ag. Argive School.
p. Painter.	A. M. Asia Minor.	Æ. Æginetan School
c. Ceramist.	M. G. Magna Græcia.	S. Sicyonic School.

The names of painters, sculptors, architects, ceramists, and other workers in the plastic arts are in italics. The names of the principal masters are in heavy type.

Only such monuments are mentioned in the synoptic tables as still exist or of which there are fragments of sufficient importance to constitute a work which possesses interest from the artistic or archæological point of view. Exception is made in the case of destroyed monuments of particular celebrity, as the temple of Hera at Olympia (the earliest Greek temple known), the Colossus of Rhodes, the Tower of Babel, the Temple of Solomon, the Sanctuary of Eleusis, and the Asclepieion of Epidaurus.

Gallo-Roman Art (III Century A.D.). (*Museum of Sens.*)

B.C.[1]	Prehistoric Lands	Asia	Egypt
300th century (?)	Basin of the Garonne, Vézère-Pyrenees, etc. (Cave-dwelling reindeer hunters)		
	Split-off flints		
200th century (?)			
	Arms and tools of bone		
	Carved bones and stones		
100th century (?)	(Bruniquel, Laugerie-Basse, Laugerie-Haute, Mas d'Azil, Lorthet, La Madelene, Brassempouy, Baoussé-Roussé, Cro-Magnon, Le Moustier, Arudy, Gourdan, Lourdes, Cap-Blanc, Willendorff, etc.)		
	Painted and engraved walls		
75th century (?)	(Combarelles, Fond de Gaume, Le Tuc d'Audoubert, Bernifal, La Mouthe, Marsoulas, Niaux. Salitré, Laussel, Comarque, Teyjat, Pair-Non-Pair, Covalanas, Castillo, Tortosilla, Homos de la Peña, Altamira, etc.)		
60th century (?)	Split-off flints		
50th century (?)			Carved flints
			Carved flints
40th century	Scandinavia, France, Switzerland (Lake cities)		Potteries
			Wrought metals
	Polished flints	Chaldea[1]	
35th century			Stone and ivory statuett

Greece	Rome	Geological Epochs[1]
		Glacial period
		Epoch of Aurignac
		Paleolithic epoch
		(Chelles)
		(Le Moustier)
		(Solutré)
		Magdalenian epoch
		Totemism
		Warm and moist period
		Neolithic epoch
		Totemism
		Sothic period. Classic calendar (4240) Hieroglyphic writing (?) Babylon. Astronomy
		Fou-Hi, Chinese legislator (3468?)

[1] The dates are merely approximations and may vary by many centuries.

B.C.[1]	Prehistoric Lands	Asia	Egypt
33d century	Necklaces, Bracelets, Potteries	Observatory Temples (The Tower of Babel)	Ancient Empire[1] (*Memphis, I to X Dyna*
30th century	Scandinavia,[1] France, Brittany, Spain, England (*Megalithic monuments*)	Engraved cylinders	Sphinx of Gizeh, Thinite gees of Abydos, Hierac and Negadyie Pyramid o at Sakkarah
		Palace of Tello Statues of Goudea	Temple of pink grani Archaic statues of dio
		Stele of the Vultures	Pyramid of Meidou
	Menhirs	*Cheo-Hang* invents painting in China (?)	
28th century			Hypogees of Sakkara
			Pyramids of Gizeh
		Megalithic monuments in India	Mastaba of Gizeh Limestone statues
	Dolmens		Archaic paintings Mastaba of *Ti*, s. in ob Sakkarah
		The Chinese scale (?)	Pyramids of Abousir Mastaba of Ptahhotep a karah
25th century	Triliths		Apogee of sculpture and p ing Pyramid of Ounos at Sak Mastaba of Meri
			Pyramids of Sakkarah Seated Scribe of the Lou
22d century		Temple of Ourou in Chaldea	Middle Empire[1] (*Thebes, XI to XVI Dyna*
21st century	Cromlechs	Code of the Laws of Hammu-rabi in Chaldea (on stone)	Obelisk of Heliopolis Hypogees of Sint Hypogees of Abydos
20th century		First Chinese bronze (?)	Pyramids of Fayoum
	Alignments		Great Temple of Amon Karnak
19th century			Hypogees of Beni-Hass Hypogees of Assaouar
18th century			Apogee of jeweler's art and smith's art Industrial and intimate Pyramid of Dahchour
	Covered alleys	First Chinese ceramics (?)	Classic funerary sculptu
17th century			The labyrinth (Temple Haouara)
16th century	Megalithic monuments		Colossus of Sowakhotep Sphinx of Tanis
		Statue of Napir-Asou in Chaldea	The bearer of offerings of Louvre Hypogees, paintings
15th century			New Empire[1] (*Thebes, XVII to XX nasties*)
	Megalithic monuments		Academic funerary sculpt Temple of Deir el-bahr
	Megalithic monuments		Temple of Amada First hypogees of Biban Moluk

Greece	Rome	Geological Epochs [1]
		Menes founds the Egyptian empire (3300?)
		The great dike
Ægean Period [1] *Argolis, Archipelago, Troy*)		
Cyclopean walls ace of Phæstos in Crete		Exploitation of the mines of Sinai
Pelasgic walls		*Cheops, Khephren*, Pharaohs
rought metals, potteries (*Troad*)		The House of the Books
		Dynasty of the *Hia* in China (2205)
		Abraham. The patriarchs of Israel
Terra cottas (*Troad*)		The Hebrews in Egypt (?)
		Power of Sidon. Cuneiform writing (?)
e of the reapers of Phæstos		Lake Mœris (?)
		Conquest of Nubia by the Egyptians Invention of papyrus (?)
		Invasion of the Hyksos in Egypt
		The Aryans in India (?)—The Rig-Veda (?) Egypt expels the Hyksos
Palace of Tyrinth as-reliefs, frescoes, pottery)		
Marble idols		The Mesopotamian canals (?)
Palace of Knossos, Crete Bas-reliefs, frescoes, pottery)		*Minos*
		Vasya (?)—The Mahabarata (?)
		The Phœnicians invent the alphabet

[1] The dates are merely approximations and may vary by many centuries.

B.C.[1]	Prehistoric Lands	Asia	Egypt
			Speos of Gebel Silsi
			Hypogees of Cheik el A
			Kourna
			Senmout, a.
			Colossuses of Memn
			Temple of Amenophis I
			El-Kab
14th century	Megalithic monuments		Temple of Luxor
			Hypogees of El-Amar
			Temple of Sethos I at K
			Temple of Sethos I at A
		Phœnician textiles, potteries, and glass	Great hypostyle hall of K
			Meiy, a. in chief of Th
			The Serapeum
			The Rameseum
			Colossus of Rameses
			Great temple and colossu
			Ibsamboul
			Cavern-temple of Ger
			Housein
			Temple of Bent-el-Ou
			Temple of Hathor at Ib
			boul
			Temple of Seb ua
			Speos of Derr
13th century	Megalithic monuments		Restorations of monum
			Hypogees of Biban-el-M
		Hittite art	Temple of Khonsou at K
			Great temple of Rameses
			at Medinet Abou
			Tomb of the Queens at Me
			Abou
			Hypogees of Biban-el-M
12th century	Megalithic monuments Bronze weapons and tools	First Chinese jades (?)	
	Bronze weapons and tools		
11th century	Bronze weapons and tools	Cypriote art	Jewelry—Goldsmith's a
			Industrial and intimate
		Hiram, Phœnician, a.	
			Saite Empire
10th century	Bronze weapons and tools	Temple of Jerusalem	(*Delta, XXI to XXX L* *nasties*) (950)

Greece	Rome	History
		Conquest of Assyria by the Egyptians
Mycenean potteries		*Moses*.—The Hebrews depart from Egypt
		Power of Tyre
		Rameses II (Sesostris ?) (1330?-1265?)
Treasuries with cupolas Palace of Mycenean		
of the Lions at Mycenean Potteries, terra cottas		*Rameses III* (Sesostris?) (1230?-1200?)
Treasury of Orchomene Tombs of Mycenean Jewels and masks of gold)		Trojan War
Vases of Vaphio		Chou Dynasty in China (1122) The judges in Israel
		Invasions of the Dorians in Greece and in Crete
Hellenic Period		
		Homer
		David (999-959)
		Solomon (959-929)
st terra cottas at Tanagra		Nineveh

[1] The dates are merely approximations

B.C.[1]	Prehistoric Lands	Asia	Egypt
		Assyria	
		Zigurats (towers of stages) Hanging gardens	
9th century	Bronze weapons and tools	Bas-reliefs (Monsters, winged geniuses, kings and warriors, scenes of hunting, and war animals)	Jewelry—Goldsmith' Industrial and intima
		Engraved cylinders	
		Palace and bas-reliefs of Nimrod	
8th century	Bronze weapons and tools	Palace and bas-reliefs of Khorsabad	Industrial and intim
		Palace of Zindjirbi	
		Palace of Dour-Sharroukin	
			(Egyptian Renaiss
			Seated chiefs of cit
	Megalithic monuments		Portraits
7th century		Palace and bas-reliefs of Koujoundjick	Restorations of tem
	Bronze weapons and tools		Jewelry—Goldsmith' Industrial and intima
			Statuettes of wom
		Reconstruction of the Tower of Babel	

Greece	Rome	History
		Elijah—The prophets in Israel
ipylon vases at Athens		*Lycurgus* in Sparta (884) *Assurnarzipal* (885-860)
		The Jehovist. Genesis (?)
		Struggle of the Assyrians and the Hittites
		Founding of Carthage
	Etruscan art	*Hesiod*
		Era of the Olympiads (776)
Xoana (wooden idols)		*Archilochus*
(The Doric Order)	Funerary urns	Founding of Rome (753) Era of Nabonassar (747)
		Isaiah (774-690) *Sargon* (722-705) Greek colonies in Italy and in Sicily
ple of Hera at Olympia		
Corinthian vases		*Sennacherib* (705-681) destroys Babylon (692)
cus and *Theodorus* mold in bronze	Etruscan paintings and tombs	Conquest of Egypt by the Assyrians (671)
First coins		*Assurbanipal* (667-25)
inine statue of Eleutherma (Crete)	**(The Tuscan Order)**	*Tyrtæus*
ple of Selinus (628), M.G.		
Artemis of Delos		
Mikkiades, s. of Chios	Etruscan vases (Importations from Greece)	
(The Ionic Order)		Laws of *Draco* (614)
iphron, s. of the first temple of Ephesus A. M.		The Phœnicians make the tour of Africa (609) The Medes destroy Nineveh (608)
Temple of Corinth		*Jeremiah* (650-590)
		Founding of Marseilles (600)

[1] The dates are approximate.

B.C.	Prehistoric Lands	Asia	Egypt
			Statuettes and portr
		Medo-Persian Empire (*Assyro-Egypto-Ionic Art*	
		Reconstruction of the Temple of Solomon	
6th century	Megalithic monuments Bronze weapons and tools		Jewelry—Goldsmith's Industrial and intimat
		Palace of Persepolis	
		Tomb of Cyrus at Pasargades	
		Bas-reliefs of Behistoun	
		Apadana of Susa	
		Bicephalous bulls	
		Frieze of the archers and the lions	
	Megalithic monuments		
		Tomb of Darius at Persepolis	
		Monuments of Istakhr	
5th century (First half)			Jewelry—Goldsmith's Industrial and intimate

Greece	Rome	History
		Founding of Cyrene (598)
Argos, Sicyon, Sparta)		Nebuchadnezzar (604-561) rebuilds Babylon (597)
Vases (black on red)		Solon (594)
Polymedes, Ag. s.		
Dorian Apollos		
		The Pythian games (586)
		Captivity of Babylon (585-535).
oinos and *Skillys*, Cretan ss.	The Cloaca Maxima of Rome (Etruscan)	The Isthmic games [*Ezekiel*
Hera of Samos (580)		
ple of Zeus at Syracuse, M.G.		*Alceus*, *Sappho*
Archemos, s. of Chios		
Temple of Selinus, M.G.		*Empedocles*
Nike of Delos		
othas and *Aristocles*, S. ss.		
Kanakhos, S. s.		
		Zoroaster (?) the Avesta (?)
Polygonal wall of Delphi		
rgotinos, *Klitias*, *Ezekias*, c. and p.		
Basilica of Pæstum, M.G.		
Statue of Chares		*Lao-Tsze* (604-529)
Parthenon of Pisistratus	Etruscan paintings and tombs	
Hagelaidas Ag. s.		
		Sakyamuni (The Buddha) (?)
Endoios, A. s.		
The Moscophorus		*Pisistratus* (560-527)
	The she-wolf of the Capitol (Etruscan)	
palos and *Athenis*, ss. of Chios		*Anacreon*
emple of Apollo at Delphi		*Cyrus* (560-29) takes Babylon (538)
Vases (red on black)	Black stone of the Forum (?)	*Heraclitus* (576-480)
		Cambyses (529-22) conquers Egypt (528)
treasury of the Cnidians at Delphi		
Eumaros, p.		
Orantes of the Acropolis		
		Pythagoras (552-472)
Bathycles, s. of Magnesia		
eat temple of Herakles at Agrigentum, M.G.		
Stele of Aristion	Temple of Tarquinius Superbus at Rome (509)	Athenian Republic—Roman Republic (509)
emple of Metaponte, M.G.		
Antenor, A. s.		
The Tyrannicides		
		Confurius (*Kung Fu Tze*) (551-479)
(Athens)		
Calon A.E. s.		*Theognis* of Megara
Temple of Ægina		*Aristides* (540-468)
		Darius (521-485)
Glaucos and *Dionysos*, Ag. ss.		Athens repulses Asia
Ephebe of the Acropolis		Marathon (490). *Miltiades* (?-489)
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Hegias and *Micon*, A. s.		
mple of Demeter at Pæstum, M.G.	Etruscan tombs	Sack of Athens. Salamis (480). *Themistocles* (525-459), Platæa, Mycale (479). *Pausanias* (?-474)
Panænos, Ag. p.		
Demeter of Eleusis		*Æschylus* (525-456)
Glaucias, A.E. s.		*Pindar* (522-442)

B.C.	Prehistoric Lands	Asia	Egypt
	Bronze weapons and tools		
		Tombs of the Achemenides	
			Herodotus visits Egypt
	Megalithic monuments		
5th century (2d half)		Hispano-Phœnician bust of Elche	
	Bronze weapons and tools		
	Megalithic monuments		

GREECE	ROME	HISTORY
...goras and *Onatas*, A.E. ss.		
		Rebuilding of Athens
...erra cottas of Tanagra		
...ancers of Herculaneum		*Cimon* (?-449)
...le of Hera at Agrigentum, M.G.		
Charioteer of Delphi (462)		
Libon, a. of the ...le of Zeus at Olympia (460)	Etruscan walls of Norma and of Alatri (?)	*Pericles* (494-429) Hegemony of Athens
Centaurs and Lapiths)		
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...as, *Nesiotes*, and *Calamis*, A. ss.		
...le of Zeus at Agrigentum, M.G.		
Polycleitus, A. s.		
...ple of Concord at Agrigentum, M. G.		
...eater of Syracuse, M.G.		
...n, A. s. The Discus Thrower		
...le of Neptune at Pæstum, M.G.		
The Theseion		The Law of the Twelve Tables at Rome
Phidias, A. s. (490-431)		
Ictinos, A. s. of The Parthenon (447-32)		
the sanctuary of Eleusis		
...amene and *Pœonios*, A. ss.		
Polygnotus, A. p.		
Agoracritus, A. s.		
...ouris, *Euphronios*, and *...Brygos*, A. cc.		
...Temple of Segesta, M.G.		
		Sophocles (495-406)
Mnesicles, A. a. of The Propylæa (437)		
		Herodotus (484-406)
...Temple of Cape Sunion		
		Euripides (480-406)
...eater of Segesta (?), M.G.		
...emple of Zeus at Nemea		*Democritus* (490-380)
Sicilian coins, M.G.	Etruscan tombs	*Thucydides* (471-401)
Jewelry—Goldsmith's art ...ndustrial and intimate art		*Socrates* (469-399)
Temple of Phigalia (419)		*Alcibiades* (450-404)
The Erechteion (415)		Wars of the Peloponnesus (431-404)
Kallimachos, a.		
The Corinthian Order)		*Aristophanes* (455-388)
...mple of the Wingless Victory		
The Dancers of Delphi		
		Hippocrates (460-380)
...ryelus of Syracuse, M.G. (402-397)		
		Hegemony of Sparta
Bas-relief of Leda (Athens)		
Stadium of Delphi (?)		Retreat of the Ten Thousand (399). *Xenophon* (445-354)
...ycleitus the Younger, a. of the Theater of Epidaurus		Rome taken by the Gauls (390-389)
Daedalos, A. s.		
Asclepicion of Epidaurus		*Epaminondas* (415-362)

B.C.	Prehistoric Lands	Asia	Egypt
		Palace of Firouz-Abad in Persia	
4th century		Hispano-Phœnician art	Jewelry—Goldsmith's Industrial and intima
			Portico of Nektanebo at
	Bronze weapons and tools	The Hindoo scale	
		Palace of Sarvistan in Persia	
		Phœnician sarcophagi of Sidon	
			Ptolemaic Empire
	Megalithic monuments		
			Temple of Debot
3d century		Stupa of Sanchi in India	
		Columns of Asoka in India	Jewelry—Goldsmith's Industrial and intimate
		Lie-Y, Chinese p.	
		The great wall of China (246)	

Greece	Rome	History
archus, p. and decorator discovers perspective		
Zeuxis, A. p.	Etruscan tombs	
Apollodorus, A. p.		
Parrhasios, A. p.		*Plato* (429-348)
Eupompos, p.		Hegemony of Thebes
Cephisodotus, A. s.		
Scopas		
ixis and *Timotheos*, A. ss.		
he Mausoleum of Halicarnassus, A.M. (352)		
pogee of the Tanagras		
mphilos, Macedonian, p.		
Pythios, Ionian a.		
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		Aristotle (384-322)
The Niobides		*Philip* (359-336). Hegemony of Macedonia (338)
ument of Lysicratus (335)		
iple of Priene, A.M. (334)		*Mencius* (*Meng-Tze*) (?-314)
d temple of Ephesus, A.M.	Etruscan tombs	
ares and *Euphranor*, A. ss.		*Alexander* (356-323) conquers Egypt and Asia Minor and penetrates into India
Demeter of Cnidus		
Temple of Lycosoura		
pelles (356-308), A. p.		
Silanion, s.		*Valmiki* (?) The Ramayana
Apollo of the Belvedere	*Fabius Pictor*, p.	The Ptolemaic Empire (323)
Nicias, A. p.		
raxiteles (360-280), A. s.		*Zeno.* Stoicism
Daxenes of Tarentum (350-?)		
Philon, a. of the	Appian Way (312)	
Portico of Eleusis (311)		
Lysippus, A. s.		
nogenes, a. of the temples of Magnesia and of Teos		
nias, *Protogenes* and *Aetion*, p. p.		Founding of Alexandria (305)
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	Sarcophagus of Scipio Barbatus (298)	
Hellenistic Period		*Manetho*, Egyptian historian
(Asia Minor)		The Museum of Alexandria
nds, Alexandria, Cyrenaica)		*Euclid*
Sarcophagus of Alexander, A.M.		Rome subjects Etruria
Victory of Samothrace		Epicurus (331-270)
Chares, s.		*Pyrrhus* against Rome (280-274)
emple of Apollo at Delos		
Colossus of Rhodes		
Timomachos, p.	First silver coins (269)	Rome becomes mistress of Italy (270)
Polyeuctos, s.		First Punic War (264-41)
pigonos, s. of Pergamum	Rostral column of Duilius (260)	*Asoka*, King of India (277-23), becomes a Buddhist
ra cottas of Myrina, A.M. (*Diphilos*, coroplast)		
The Dying Gladiator	Etruscan tombs	*Archimedes* (287-212)

B.C.	Prehistoric Lands	Asia	Egypt
		Sarcophagi, potteries, masks, and jewels of Carthage (Africa)	Temple of Isis at Pl Temple of Edfu (237-212—176-12
	Bronze weapons and tools		
			The trilingual stone of (196)
	(?) Prehistoric sculpture (stone) (Gaul, Spain)	(India) Temple of Kandajiri Greco-Buddhistic sculpture Temple of Bhaja	Temple of Kom Om Temple of Hathor at
	Megalithic monuments	Chaitya of Karli (163) Temple of Ajunta Stupa of Bharhut	Alexa
2d century	Bronze weapons and tools	Bas-reliefs of Hiao-Tang-Chan in China	
	Coins and bronzes of Gaul	Temple of Buddha-Gaya in India (?)	
			Temple of Esne
			Sanctuary of Osiris at
		Hebrew sarcophagi	
			Alex
1st century	Weapons, coins, and bronzes of Gaul		
			Temple of Hathor at D
			Roman kiosk of Phil
			Roman temple of Ho Kalabche
			Restorations of temp

GREECE	ROME	HISTORY
		Ptolemy III fixes the length of the year as 365¼ days (238)
The Sleeping Fury		
welry—Goldsmith's art Intimate sculpture	Cist of Ficoroni (*Novios Plautius*, bronzeworker)	
	Flaminian Way (220)	*Theocritus*
		Hannibal (247-183), Second Punic War (218-02)
Cleomenes, s.		Rome subjects Magna Græcia and Sicily (211)
Alexandrian	art	*Plautus* (250-184) *Antiochus the Great* (222-186). Power of Antioch
ted pugilist of the Thermæ		*Philopæmen* (233-183)
Damophon, s. (Statues of Lycosoura)		*Ennius* (240-169) *Hipparcus*, astronomer
		Judas Maccabeus (200-160)
. onos and *Stratonicos*, ss. of Pergamum tar of Pergamum, A.M.	*Pacuvius* (220-130), p.	Invention of paper in China (?)
Theater of Delphi	Aqua Marcia (146)	Destruction of Carthage (147) Greece becomes a Roman province (146)
Timarchides, Polykles, The Venus of Milo (*Hagesandros* ?, s.)	Greek ss. at Rome	
tesibios invents the organ		*Tiberius* and *Caius Gracchus* (133-121)
Euboulides, s.		
dronicos Cyrrhestes, s. of the)wer of the Winds, Athens	*Mutius*, s.	*Marius* defeats the Cimbri and the Teutons (102-101)
(School of Rhodes)	Importations of Greek works at Rome	*Sylla* (126-78)
llonios of Tralles, s. of the Farnese Bull	Roman copies of Greek works Aqueduct of Tarragona	*Lucretius* (98-55) Revolt of the slaves at Rome—*Spartacus* (73) *Lucullus* (109-57) against *Mithridates* *Cicero* (106-43) [(135-63)
esandros, s. of the Laocoon	*Coponius*, s. *Titidius Labeo* and Arellius, pp.	
llonios, A. s. of the Hercules of the Belvedere	*Vitruvius*, s. and critic	*Cæsar* (100-44) conquers Gaul (51)
	The Aldobrandini wedding	
(Roman School)	Tomb of Cecilia Metella	
Pasiteles, s.	The Edility of *Agrippa* (33)	*Vergil* (70-19)
The throne of Venus (?)	The Palatine-House of Livia The Pantheon of Agrippa (26)	*Augustus* (63+14)—The Roman Empire (31)
Stephanos, s.	(*Valerius of Ostia*, s.) Pont du Gard (19)	*Horace* (65-08)
Venus of the Esquiline (?)	Ludius, p. Theater of Marcellus (13) Pyramid of Cestius (12)	
Glycon, s. of the Farnese Hercules	Tomb of Vergilius Euryaces Kabr er Roumya, Numidian tomb in Algeria	*Titus Livius* (—59+19)
Dioscurides, mosaist, M.G.	Sarcophagi Busts and statues	
	Bridge of Rimini (14)	*Jesus Christ* (—04+29)
Amphitheater of Po	zzuoli (?), M.G.	
Menelaos and *Archelaos*, ss. (Roman School)	Arch of Triumph of Orange	*Philo the Jew* (—30+54)
	Amubius, p.	*Strabo*

A.D.	Prehistoric Lands	Asia	Egypt
			Alexa
1st century			
			Necropolis of Alexandr
			Gate of Hadrian at Phil
2d century			
		Bas-reliefs of Ou-Leang-Tze in China	Alexan
			Sarcophagus portraits
		Tsai-Yong, Chinese p.	

Greece	Rome	History
Theater of Taormi	na, M.G.	
Crouching Venuses	Theater of Saguntum (?), Sp.	Greece pillaged by the Romans
Venus of Arles	Mausoleum of Saint-Remy (?)	*Seneca* (2-65)
	Quintus Pedius, p.	
	Art of the Catacombs	
Alexan	drian art	
	Aqua Claudia	*Saint Paul* at Athens (54)
	Turpilius, p.	
	Pliny the Elder (23-79), critic	*Nero* (54-68). Burning of Rome (64)
	Maison Carrée of Nîmes	The Emperor *Ming-Ti* becomes a
	The Coliseum	Buddhist (64)
Monuments of Hercula	neum and Pompeii, M.G.	
	Arch of Titus	
lptures, paintings, and ind	ustrial art of Herculaneum and	Taking of Jerusalem by the Romans
of Pom	peii, M.G.	(71)
	Arena of Pola	
		Destruction of Herculaneum and Pompeii (79)
eas, *Papias*, Greek ss. at Rome	*Frontinus* (40-103), engineer	*Josephus* (37-?)
	Arena of Arles	
	Monuments of Cherchell, Af.	
	Amphitheater of Saintes (?)	*Juvenal* (42-?)
		Tacitus (55-117)
	Lacer, a. of the	*Epictetus*
	Bridge of Alcantara (105)	
Apollodorus of Da	mascus, Greek a. of Trajan	*Trajan* (98-117)
	Golden Gate of Pola	
	Trajan's column (112)	
	Gate of Benevento	
	Bridge and monuments of Mérid	
	Aqueduct of Segovia	*Plutarch*
nument of Philopappos	Bridge of Salamanca	
	Monuments of Timgad, Af	
		Hadrian (117-138)
Arch of Hadrian	at Athens	
	Temple of Baalbeck, A.M.	
Cossutius, Roman a. of	the Olympieion (134-35)	
	Nonius Datus, a. of the	*Lucian of Samosata*
	Aqueduct of Cherchell, Af. (137)	*Ptolemy*, astronomer
	Amphitheater of Treves	
	Aqueduct and waterworks of	
	Zaghouan, Af.	
Alexan	drian art	
	Mole of Hadrian	
	Theater of Orange	
	Art of the Catacombs	
	Arena of Nîmes	
Pausanias visits Greece	Capitol of Dougga, Af.	Roman Embassy in China (166)

A.D.	Prehistoric Lands	Asia	Egypt
		Chaitya of Amravati in India	
		Stupa of Sambrunath in India (Nepal)	
		Tsao-fou-hing, Chinese p.	
3d century			
		Bridges of Dizfoul and of Chouster in Persia	
		Bas-reliefs of Sapor at Nakch-e-Roustem	
		Fortress of Gwalior in India	Sarcophagus por
		Iron column of Delhi	
		Buddhistic frescoes of Turkestan	
4th century		First porcelain tower at Nankin (China)	
		Kou-K'ai-Tche, Chinese p.	

Greece	Rome	History
	Arena of El Djem, Af.	*Marcus Aurelius* (161-180)
	Column of Marcus Aurelius (180)	
Odeon of Herod Atticus		
	Monuments of Djerach, Af.	
	Septizonium of Septimius Severus	*Kalidasa* (?). The Sakuntala (?)
	Arch of Septimius Severus (203)	
	Arch of Triumph of Lambessa, Af.	
	Arch and Temple of Tebessa, Af. (214)	*Tertullian* (160-240)
	Theater of Aspendos (?) A.M.	
	Art of the Catacombs	
	Statues of the Vestals	
Alexandrian art		*Plotinus* (205-70)
	Busts, statues, sarcophagi	
	Colonnades of Palmyra, A.M.	
	Walls of Aurelian at Rome (271)	*Aurelian* (270-75)
	Temple of the Sun at Palmyra, A.M. (273)	
	Arena of Verona (296)	
	Palace of the Thermæ at Lutece	
	Column of Pompey at Alexandria (302)	
	Thermæ of Dioclet an at Spalato	
	Arch of Constantine (315)	*Constantine* (306-37). Triumph of Christianity
	Basilica of Constantine	*Byzantium* (326)
	Arch of Janus Quadrifons (?)	
	Gate of Treves (?)	*Julian the Apostate* (361-63)
		Saint Jerome (331-420)
		Theodosius the Great (378-95) destroys the pagan idols (383)
	Church of Saint Paul outside the walls (386)	*St. John Chrysostom* (347-407)
		The Visigoths destroy Eleusis (395)
		End of the Olympic games (396)
		Hypatia (370-415)

HISTORY OF ART

MEDIÆVAL ART

BEHZADE (Persia). Man painting.
(*From Les Miniatures Persanes.*)

ELIE FAURE

HISTORY OF ART

MEDIAEVAL ART

To

My Friends of the Université Populaire

"La Fraternelle"

1905-1909

KHMER ART. Ornament of a pilaster. (*Angkor.*)

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THE ENTOMBMENT OF THE VIRGIN (*Cathedral of Senlis*)

INTRODUCTION

WHILE the distant civilization of China delays the hour of its death by turning to its past, while India, to assuage its fever, spreads a religion across Asia, the shadows deepen, little by little, over the shores on which was passed the brilliant and virile youth of the western world. From the beginning of history, the ocean of the peoples ebbs and flows from the plateau of Iran to the fresh and healthful lands that face the Atlantic. On the plains of northern Europe silent invasions have accumulated reserves of men who will renew the innocence of the southern peoples when a too enervating contact with Asia shall weaken their faith in their own intelligence. We have seen the Phœnicians bring to Greece and to Italy, together with the science and the ideals of Chaldea and Egypt, the echo from India of the mystic intoxications through which the religious thrill of universal life entered the order of the Occident. We have seen Greece, in the train of Alex-

ander, transmitting its spark of inspiration to the troubled and tired soul of India. Rome, in its turn, is to feel the sensualism of Asia when it brings peace to that land. . . . The movement was exhausting its rhythm little by little. A long repose had to follow the expenditure of energy from which the future of the world had come forth; human nature had to retire into itself to allow its overstrained mind and its perverted senses to forget their conquests and to renew the desire to get back to their natural sources.

From the day when the unity of the Greek soul begins to disintegrate, when two currents appear in the thought of the philosophers and the sensibility of the artists, when Plato and Praxiteles oppose spiritual life to the materialism of Lysippus and Aristotle, from that day the youth of mankind ceased to enchant the world. Their antagonistic tendencies—rationalism that halts the movement of instinct, and sensualism that unseats the will—both lead to the negation of effort. And the skeptic and the mystic open the road to the apostles who come to sow, in the anxious heart of the multitudes, remorse at having lived too fully and an eager desire to purge themselves of the impurity of the body by such an exaltation of the soul that a thousand years will be required by the peoples of the Occident to recover their dignity in a new equilibrium.

It was by the spiritual fusion of metaphysics and morality, by the projection beyond ourselves—who are wicked and corrupt—of an absolute which makes it our duty to repent having been born, that monotheism without compromise was formulated for the first time in the doctrine of the Hebrew prophets. God was outside of the world henceforward, man could no longer attain Him save beyond the confines of his own life. This unity of the divine, which was asserted by the theologians, implanted in our nature that terrible

dualism which was doubtless an indispensable trial for all of us, and which still remains so. It was this dualism that caused us to wander for long centuries in search of ourselves. It kept alive for a thousand years, in the depths of our minds, the painful conflict between the solicitations of the senses and the haunting idea of salvation. But it is perhaps, thanks to this dualism again, that we know that our strength lies in the harmony, which we seek in suffering and realize in joy, between our animality—which is sacred—and our reason—which is sacred.

The most expressive and highest manifestation of that harmony — art, the living form which sprang from the marriage of matter and mind to affirm their unity—art had to die at the same time that the nature-creeds died, when the ethical religions appeared, denying its usefulness and precipitating humanity upon paths the reverse of those it had trod up to that time. First, the Jews, who brought into Occidental thought the imposing and sterile spirit of the solitudes, hated and condemned form. The Arabs, born of the same stock, were also to manifest their disdain for it. To change all this there was needed the contact with the soil of Europe, with its bays, its mountains, its fertile plains, its vivifying air, its variety of appearances, and its problems. And it was only after ten centuries of painful struggle, of efforts forever defeated and forever renewed, that the peoples of Europe tore themselves from the powerful embrace of the Semitic idea. It was necessary that India should feel in the very substance of the Buddhistic idea, vibrant within it and creating its strength and its compelling beauty, the incessant action of fecundity and death which causes its forests and rivers to move, in order that it should repeople the temples with its hundred thousand living gods.

After the pantheism of Vedic India and the polytheism of Æschylean Greece had attained their highest expression, and their decline had commenced, there appeared, in the depths of the great moral religions which began to claim dominion over the world, the same despairing sentiment of the final uselessness of action. Man everywhere was fatigued by living, by thinking, and he deified his fatigue as, when he loved action, he had deified his courage. The resignation of the Christian, the belief in Nirvana of the Buddhist, the fatalism of the Arab, and the traditionalism of the Chinese are born of the same pessimistic need for avoiding effort. For some centuries the Arabs escaped the consequences of this discouraging idea, but only because the sole effort demanded from them by the Prophet was an outward effort, satisfying the essential needs of their nomadic and conquering life, and because repose was promised them in death itself, to which they hurled themselves in the charge of their cavalry, leaving to the vanquished peoples the task of working for them. The Chinese, again, escape only through their absence of idealism and their positive spirit whose energy is employed, precisely, to fetter and retard action. But the generalizing peoples of the Occident, the sensual peoples of India, could extricate themselves from these consequences only if they profited by the repose that the doctrines themselves imposed on them. And so they drove the roots of their instinct deeper into their earth and fought with all their rejuvenated power against the spirit of renunciation to which the disciples of Sakyamuni and of Jesus had dragged the crowds whose interest it was to listen to them while they hid the faces of the two men who were all love and therefore all action.

Now that the ethical religions are a part of history, now that we have learned that the moral need loses its

power when it presumes to annihilate or diminish the æsthetic need of which it is only one aspect, we are sufficiently strong to recognize that Christianity and Buddhism introduced into the world an admirable element of passion. In India, Buddhism had never really assumed the character of radical opposition to Brahmanism that Christianity adopted toward the pagan religions. It was not the spirit of one soil and one race going forth to combat the spirit of another soil and another race. It was born of the very current that urged the peoples of India to mingle their soul with the voices of the universe, and to beseech the voices of the universe to permeate that soul incessantly; it was an extension in the moral world of the formidable sensualism whose appeal men could not ignore when that sensualism fused their mind with the mind of the wild beasts, the forests, the waters, and the stones. In the Occident, on the contrary, in the bosom of Christianity, organized into a political system, the invasion of the human soul by the forces of nature could take on no other aspect than that of rebellion. And therein we have the reason why the Christian soul has stamped a profound imprint on the form of our mind.

By teaching the hatred of life, Christianity multiplied our very power to live when the fatalities of economic and political evolution in Occidental society brought them into contact with life, adapted their organs to new functions, and assured new satisfactions to their needs. Our senses had kept silence for a thousand years; for a thousand years the sap of humanity had been turned back to our hearts; for a thousand years the mind had accumulated, in a frightful solitude, a world of confused desires, of unexpressed intuitions, of fevers only partly allayed, which caused the love of the world to burst forth from the mind when it could be restrained no longer, and then it appeared with all

the intoxication of the beasts of the forests when released from cages. There is no more magnificent spectacle in history than that of humanity, in its religious frenzy, hurling itself on form to make it fruitful again.

It is in this spectacle that we must seek for the origin of the differences that are noticeable when we consider in their ensemble the manifestations of ancient art and mediæval art, especially in India and in western Europe. The ancient world had never forbidden the love of form; it had, on the contrary, arrived through form—by a progressive, harmonious, continuous effort—at the philosophic generalizations formulated by the sculptors of Athens toward the middle of the century of Æschylus, of Sophocles, and of Phidias. Egypt, confined by the theocracy within the metaphysical limits from which it was forbidden to go onward, had studied man in his structure and had defined for all time the form of the shadow that he will cast on the earth so long as the sun shall shine upon him. Greece, freed from dogma, had scrutinized the relations that unite man with nature, had found again in the volumes and gestures of living forms, the laws which determine harmony, in the revolution of the heavenly bodies, in the unfurling of the profiles of the earth, in the rising and falling motion of the seas. It rested with the Middle Ages of the Occident to render in form the relationships created between man and man by the griefs that have been lived through together, by the hopes too long deferred, by the joy of the senses liberated after centuries of asceticism and of physical and moral compression. The new spirit manifests itself everywhere by a wild eruption of reveling in matter that establishes an obscure and magical understanding between mediæval Europe and mediæval India. Brahman India felt living within itself the soul of Buddha as Gothic Europe, carried along by its social needs,

felt living again within itself—despite the theologians, the councils, and the fathers of the Church—the loving soul, the pitiful, artist soul of Jesus.

The reawakening of the sensuality of men took on many forms. Among the Christians it had a revolutionary appearance; among the Indians it found its nutriment as well in the moral passion of Sakyamuni as in the pantheist fever of Brahma; it manifested itself against the very spirituality of Islam in the thrust of Berber mosques, in their embroidery of metal and of wood, and in the shimmer of jewels in Persian painting; it attempted a painful escape from the clasp of the fearful nightmare of the Aztecs, bringing together again the strips of flesh that were cut up before men's eyes; it appears in the patience of the Chinese, who, through the language of form, render the entities of their moral equilibrium fit for daily life. But everywhere in the Middle Ages, and whatever the aspect of the revival, the peoples were ignorant of the real object they were pursuing; everywhere their conquest of the life of the universe was accomplished under the pretext of religion, always with the support of the letter of the dogma, always against its spirit. It is this which emphasizes so powerfully, in the art of the Middle Ages, its confused liberty, its drunken and fecund plunge into the fields of sensation, its carelessness as to spoken language—provided that language expressed something, its disordered mixture of feelings springing from the contact of the soul with the world, in the naked strength of instinct. The philosophic idea, which compels all ancient art to seek harmony of form, is rendered useless here by the anchor of dogma, which, outside itself, leaves the rejuvenated and unfettered senses free to seek their realization and permits the love, that is universal at the moment, to release itself from the control of the human will. The admirable

logic of the French cathedral builders of the Middle Ages is primarily applied to realizing a practical object, and if the Arab raises over the desert the abstract image of the mind, it is with roses and with women that he fills his cool Alhambras. Immortal Dionysus has reconquered the earth, mingling with his sensual fever the love of Buddha, the gentleness of Jesus, and the dignity of Mohammed; and when Prometheus, through the commune of the Occident, is reborn at his side, Prometheus is unconscious of himself: he also is flooded with mystic intoxication. The Middle Ages have recreated consciousness despite the gods that they adored.

It is always against the gods that the consciousness of mortals is created, even when these gods, as those of the Greek Olympus, express laws that are to be understood in order that they may be obeyed. An inevitable confusion has arisen in us, between the pretext for our beliefs and their real meaning. From the beginning of things we have seen art and religion following the same road, art being willing to move almost exclusively between the dikes of religious symbolism and changing its appearance as soon as one god replaces another. We have never asked ourselves why all the religions, even when they combat one another, express themselves in forms that constantly survive them and that time eventually finds to be in accord as well as a necessity. We have never asked ourselves why the finest creations of the artists do not always coincide with the moments of most intense religious exaltation, why the same religion often remains silent throughout its youth and expresses itself only when it approaches its decline. We have never asked ourselves why the French image makers imprinted their desires on the stones of the cathedrals only after the movement of revolt which assured the

life of the commune against the oppression of the priest and the lord, why the signs of discouragement appeared among them precisely during the course of one century, the fifteenth, when the Catholic faith knew its moment of the most ardent fever and excitement. We have never asked ourselves why India mingled its contradictory gods in the same explosion of sensual intoxication; why Islam—which has preserved to our own day the uncompromising fanaticism of ten centuries ago—lets its mosques fall to ruin and builds no others; why the Chinese artist sometimes belongs to three or four different sects, whereas the Japanese artist almost always gives the impression of belonging to none; why the European raised altars to a God of mercy at the hour when the Aztec caused his altars to run with the blood of human victims. We have never asked ourselves whether the peoples did not give to their beliefs the form of their sensations.

We must, however, in our hours of virility, have as imperious a need of artistic creation as of food and love. This need sweeps our beliefs along in its triumphal movement, for there is creation even among those peoples whose theologians and philosophers teach the final nullity of effort; their own poets sing the vanity of our activity in terms that create life. Christianity is pessimistic, Islamism is pessimistic, pantheism is pessimistic. What matter? The Christian causes a sonorous forest of vaults, of windows, of towers to spring from the soil; the Mussulman spreads the cool shadow of his cupolas over his incurable inertia; the Indian disembowels the mountains to make them fruitful. Man wants to live, and he demands of those who sing and carve to show him the way of the true life, even when they speak to him of death. It is the people that makes its gods, whichever they may be.

To be sure, we need a faith. It is only in faith that

we gather the strength necessary to resist our disillusionments and to maintain before our eyes the image of our hope. But this faith, which we decorate with new labels when a new system of metaphysics or of morality imposes itself on our needs—this faith changes only its aspect, it does not change in spirit; and as long as it lives in us, whatever the period in which our activity takes place, whichever the religion that serves it as a pretext, the forms of art, even the most diverse, will do no more than express the faith. It is simply the confidence that comes after long slumbers, and that grows weak upon a too prolonged contact with the mystery which our ardor for life urges us to penetrate. When a religion arrives at its most harmonious and expressive degree of development, this faith is not thereby awakened; on the contrary, the religion is born of the faith, it is the projection, into the field of our illusions, of the inner realities which guide and exalt us. When man is near to self-realization, he accepts, all at once and in the mass, a great simple synthesis of everything he is ignorant of, so as not to be troubled by doubt and anxiety in his search for what he wants to know. When he has learned too much, when his faith in himself weakens, his outward beliefs may last or even become exaggerated, but at the same time all the expressions of his thought vacillate. Peoples in action force any religion to bend itself to the manifestations of their original virtues. A religion models a people to its dogmas only when that people no longer believes in itself. Whatever our paradise, we realize it on earth when we have achieved self-confidence. To declare this paradise divine, we wait for centuries and search the world until the hour comes when life mounts fully in our heart, and the word "faith" is the religious name we give to energy.

Never before had this energy arisen in the world in

such a violent eruption of intoxicated mysticism. It is this that causes really religious minds, from the moment they cross the threshold of the cathedral, the mosque, or the pagoda, to forget profoundly and completely the rite that is celebrated in the place; it is this that causes them to be absolutely indifferent to the dogmas on which these temples were built; hence, too, their exaltation over the arrested and dead forms of man's religion and over the dead forms in the unlimited field of his relations with his fellow-man. The word "mystic" is still to be defined. If mysticism is that form of despair which urges the human soul, in moments of lassitude, toward external gods in whose hands it abdicates all will and desire, toward gardens which open to the dead alone and offer them flowers that smell of corpses, then the first periods of Christianity were perhaps the only ones to know this mysticism, for at that time a minimum of humanity subsisted in the multitude of superstitions and religious practices. But if mysticism appears under that form of frantic and living hope that hurls itself on the rich fields of sensation and action and gathers into its flesh all the invading forces of renewal and exaltation which the approving world pours into it simultaneously, then it is the creative spirit itself, and its accord with its flesh reveals to it the necessary means. Whatever god he adores, or even if he rejects all the gods, the man who desires to create cannot express himself if he does not feel in his veins the flow of all the rivers—even those which carry along sand and putrefaction, he is not realizing his entire being if he does not see the light of all the constellations, even those which no longer shine, if the primeval fire, even when locked in beneath the crust of the earth, does not consume his nerves, if the hearts of all men, even the dead, even those still to be born, do not beat in his heart, if abstrac-

tion does not mount from his senses to his soul to raise it to the plane of the laws which cause men to act, the rivers to flow, the fire to burn, and the constellations to revolve.

And everywhere, or practically everywhere, in the Middle Ages, the creators had these hours of confused and limitless communion with the heart and mind of matter in movement. And what is admirable about these men is that none or almost none of them has left us his name. Therein lies a phenomenon, indeed, that is perhaps unique in history—the very masses of the people contributing their strength to the life whose tide flowed in them incessantly; it is a passionate abandonment by the multitudes to the blind impulse of their regenerated instincts. Antiquity—or Greek antiquity, at least—had not known this hour, because she had achieved her conquests in a progressive effort. Here the peoples recovered, at a single bound, the lost contact with the world; and as the conquests of their past still lived, though unknown to them, in the potential power that dwelt in them, the return to action took place in a prodigious tumult. These multitudes built their temples themselves; the beating of some obscure heart sealed every stone in its place. Never has there been such a spurting forth of vaults, pyramids, belfries, and towers, such a tide of statues rising from the soil like plants to invade space and capture heaven. From the Dutch Indies and from the Himalayas to the Atlantic, from the Atlas to the North Sea, from the Peruvian Andes to the Gulf of Mexico, a swift current of irresistible love passed through space to weld the worlds that were ignorant of each other. Architecture, the anonymous and collective art, the plastic hymn of the crowds in action, issued from them with so deep a murmur, in such a transport of intoxication, that it seemed the voice of the universal hope, the same

among all the peoples of the earth, seeking in their substance the gods who were concealed from their eyes. When they had seen the face of these gods, the builders of the temples stopped, but with such a gesture of despair that it broke the iron armor within which the theocracies were walling in the intelligence, and decided the individual to make the conquest of himself.

MEDIÆVAL ART

. . . the voices seemed all
to form the same song, so perfect was their accord.
DANTE ALIGHIERI

Mont-Abou

Chapter I. INDIA

I

AT the hour when the peoples of the eastern Mediterranean were writing the first page of history, India was also beginning to live a superior moral life. But only the murmur of the Vedic hymns, more ancient by a thousand or two thousand years, perhaps, than the epics of Greece, arises from the confusion of the past. Not a single poem of stone, save a few megalithic monuments whose antiquity is not known, exists to unveil the mystery of the Indian soul before the Middle Ages of the Occident, and it seems nearer to this period than to the ancient civilizations.

It is because the tribes of Iran, when they had left the high plateaus to descend the lengths of the rivers toward the horizon of the great plains, did not find

everywhere the same soil, the same trees, the same waters, the same skies. Some of them had to face the unity of the desert, the source of the metaphysical absolutes. Others peopled the countries of moderate size, with scattered vegetation and clear-cut forms, which led them to observe objectively, and brought about the desire to complete in their minds the balanced forces that make up the harmonious universe. The Iranians who had followed the valley of the Ganges had first to give way to the intoxication of the senses. Still keeping within them the silence and the coolness of the high country, they plunged without transition into a world that overwhelmed them with its ardor and fecundity.

Never, in any part of the globe, had man found himself in the presence of an aspect of nature at once so generous and so fierce. Death and life impose themselves there with such violence that he was forced to endure them no matter what their form. To escape the dead seasons, to reach the seasons of fertility, it was enough for him to move northward or southward. Nourishing vegetation, roots, fruit, and grain sprouted from a soil that does not exhaust itself. He held out his hand and gathered up life. When he entered the woods to draw water from the great rivers or to seek materials for his house, death rose up irresistibly, carried along by the waves, as with the crocodile, hidden in the thickets, as with the tiger, writhing under the grasses with the cobra, or breaking down the rampart of trees with the step of the elephant. Scarcely, if at all, in the nocturnal tangle of tree stems, the branches, and the leaves, could he distinguish the movement of animal life from the movement of rotting matter and the flowering of herbs. Born of the hidden fermentations in which life and death fuse, the torrent of sap which feeds our universe burst from the luxuri-

ant body of the earth in healthful fruits and poisonous flowers.

The mingling aspects of generosity and cruelty that nature offered to man disarmed him mentally and

SANCHI (III Century B.C.). A gate of the Stupa.

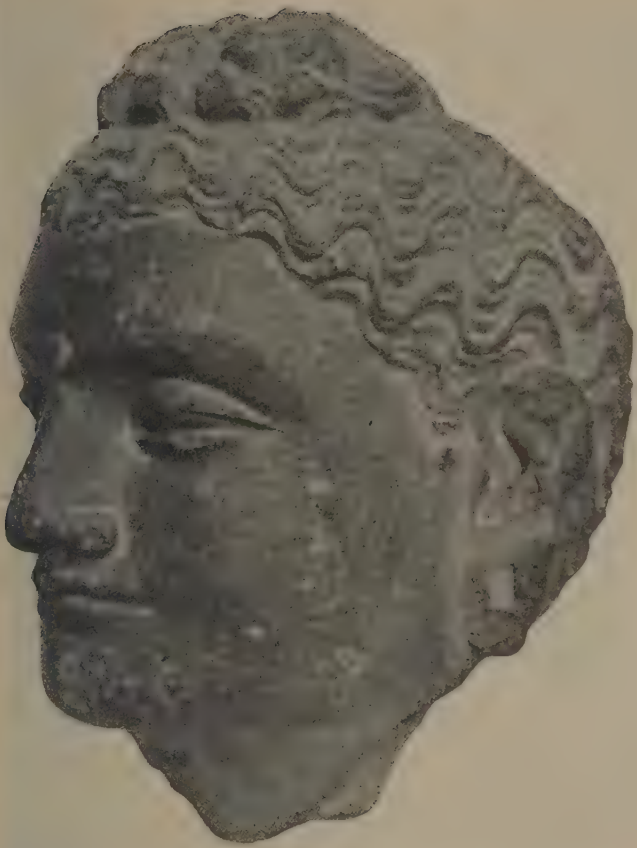
physically. The possibility of attaining a moral ideal, to be reached only through the conquest of tremendous forests and multiplied temptations, seemed to him as inaccessible as the brow of the Himalayas which lifted the highest glaciers of the earth into the blue light of

the north. Accepting life and death with the same indifference, he had to do no more than lay open his senses to the penetration of the universe and permit the gradual rise from his instincts to his soul of that grandiose, confused pantheism which is the whole of

KARLI (II Century B.C.). Bas-relief of the Chaitya.

the science, the religion, and the philosophy of the man of India.

And yet, when Alexander reached the banks of the Indus, a great social revolution was shaking the peninsula. A century before, Sakyamuni, the Buddha, had felt the flood of pantheist intoxication in his inner life, had felt it invaded by a love whose power swept him on like a river. He loved men, he loved beasts, he loved the trees, the stones — everything that



INDO-HELLENISTIC ART. Buddha. (I Century B.C.). (*Private Collection.*)

breathed, that throbbed, that moved; everything, even, whose form could be grasped by the senses, from the constellations of heaven to the grass on which one trod. Since the world is but a single body, it must be that an irresistible tenderness draws together all the dispersed elements, all the different forms which

Ellora (vi Century). Basement of the Elephants.

wander through the world. Hunger, killing, suffering, all are love. Sakyamuni tenderly offered his bare flesh to an eagle that was pursuing a dove.

Whatever the fatalism and the sensualism of a people, it always listens, at least once during the course of history, to him who comes to pour the balm of love upon its wounds. The tiger could not be conquered, it is true, the peak of the Himalayas could not be reached, and the sacred rivers that descended from

ELLORA (v Century). Monolithic temple, detail from the life of Vishnu.

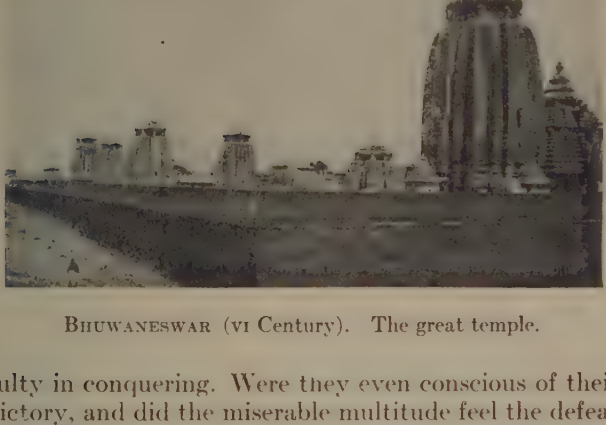
it could not cease to roll fever and life in their waters. And yet the social machinery of the Brahman, the implacable régime of castes which reflected from top to bottom the relentless rigor of the energy of the universe, was shattered by the revolt of love. Half a century after the incursion of Alexander, the emperor Asoka was forced to follow the lead of the multitudes and erect eighty-four thousand temples in commemoration of a man who had never spoken of the gods.

How long did Buddhism last in India? Seven or eight centuries, perhaps an hour of the life of these multitudes whose history, as it evolves in the past and in the future, seems as infinite and as confused as their swarming in space. India returned, insensibly, to the Vedic gods; the Brahman, supported by the prince, rebuilt the social pyramid and swept from the earth man's hope of paradise. Buddhism took refuge in the soul of a few cenobites and, beyond the frontiers of India, was to conquer Asia. Thus Christianity, born of the Semitic ideal, was to conquer the whole Occident, save the Hebrews. A revolution does not vanquish the fundamental instinct of the surroundings that provoke it.

It was from the depths of the Indian nature itself that the materialistic mysticism had risen again to stifle all the desires for humanity aroused by Buddhism. The temples with which the crowds of neophytes had sown the soil of India brought them, stone by stone, to submit anew to the ritualization of the primitive beliefs, which did not cease to be source of their emotions. The Buddhistic monument, properly so called, has almost disappeared from India. The *topes*, the great reliquaries of brick, are perhaps the only edifices not dedicated to a god having a material figure. And yet the history of Buddha, the whole of his life as it was passed among the animals and the

forests, is sculptured on the door. The *chaityas*, the basilicas that were built about the first century, already have capitals composed of animal figures. When Sakyamuni himself appears in the sanctuary, his teaching is forgotten and an instinctive sensualism overcomes the moral needs.

What did it matter to the crowds of India? They needed forms to love. The Brahmans had no diffi-



BHUWANESWAR (VI Century). The great temple.

culty in conquering. Were they even conscious of their victory, and did the miserable multitude feel the defeat weighing upon its hope? Was there a victory? Was there a defeat? Is not defeat the abdication of the real nature that has been developed by our geographical surroundings and the great secret atavism that binds us to the very depths of our history? Is not victory the triumph within us of that imperishable nature through which alone the conception of the life that is native to us can be manifested? Was a single Buddhistic temple destroyed, a single believer persecuted? Perhaps not. In India, the religious spirit

dominates dogma. One tide rises after another and, on the shore, leaves seaweed, shells, new corpses, new palpitating lives. Everything is mingled and confused —the Brahman officiates in the Buddhistic temples and venerates the statue of Buddha as well as those of Shiva, Brahma, and Vishnu. A given underground temple, begun in the first periods of Buddhism, continues to be dug out when the Tartars, after the Persians and the Arabs, have imposed Islam on half of the Indians.

II

For the Indians, all nature is divine and, below the great Indra, all the gods are of equal power and can threaten or dethrone the other gods, concrete or abstract—the sun, the jungle, the tiger, and the elephant; the forces which create and those which destroy —war, love, and death. In India everything has been god, everything is god or will be god. The gods change, they evolve, they are born and die, they may or may not leave children, they tighten or loosen their grip on the imagination of men and on the walls of the rocks. What does not die, in India, is faith—the immense faith, frenzied and confused under a thousand names; it changes its form ceaselessly, but always remains the same immeasurable power that urges the masses to action. In India there came to pass this thing: that, driven forth by an invasion, a famine, or a migration of wild beasts, thousands of human beings moved to the north or to the south. There at the shore of the sea, at the base of a mountain, they encountered a great wall of granite. Then they all entered the granite; in its shadows they lived, loved, worked, died, were born, and, three or four centuries afterward, they came out again, leagues away, having traversed the mountain. Behind them they left the emptied

AJANTA (II Century B.C. to VI Century A.D.). Fresco, detail.

rock, its galleries hollowed out in every direction, its sculptured, chiseled walls, its natural or artificial pillars turned into a deep lacework with ten thousand horrible or charming figures, gods without number and without name, men, women, beasts – a tide of animal life moving in the gloom. Sometimes when they found no clearing in their path, they hollowed out an abyss in the center of the mass of rock to shelter a little black stone.[1]

It is in these monolithic temples, on their dark walls or on their sunburnt façade, that the true genius of India expends all its terrific force. Here the confused speech of confused multitudes makes itself heard. Here man confesses unresistingly his strength and his nothingness. He does not exact the affirmation of a determined ideal from form. He incloses no system in it. He extracts it in the rough from formlessness, according to the dictates of the formless. He utilizes the indentations and the accidents of the rock. It is they that make the sculpture. If any room is left he adds arms to the monster, or cuts off his legs if the space is insufficient. If an enormous wall of rock suggests the broad masses of monsters that he has seen rolling in herds, rearing their heads on the banks of the rivers or at the edges of the forests, he cuts the wall into great pure planes to make an elephant of it. Wherever, by chance, the hollows and the projections occur, breasts swell, haunches tighten and move; the

[1] The illustration on page 15 represents a copy of the fresco of Ajanta—Shiva and Parvati—which the Indian Society has kindly authorized us to reproduce. This copy is from the brush of Nanda Lal Bose, a contemporary Indian painter and a pupil of Abanindra Nath Tagore. The school of Indian painting is being reborn, or rather, it continues. It has not ceased to take its inspiration from the Indian myths and legends that it treats – notably in the work of the two masters just cited – with a grave and tender melancholy, and according to the traditional forms of Hindu and Indo-Persian art. (See No. 200 of *L'Art Décoratif*, February, 1914.)

Reproduction authorized by the Indian Society (see page 14).

AJANTA (II Century B.C. to VI Century A.D.). Shiva and Parvati. Fresco. Copy, by Nanda Lal Bose. (*Woodroffe Collection.*)

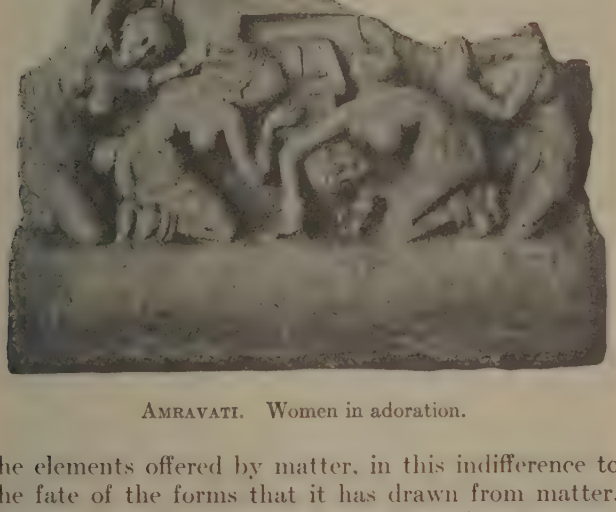
mating of men or beasts, combat, prayer, violence, and gentleness are born of matter that seems itself to be suffused with a vague intoxication. The roots of wild plants may split the forms, the blocks may crumble, the action of sun and water may gnaw the stone.

BHUWANESWAR (VI Century). The great temple, a pillar.

Yet the elements will not mingle all these lives with the confusion of the earth more successfully than the sculptor has done. Sometimes, in India, one finds enormous mushrooms of stone in the depths of the forests, shining in the green shadow like poisonous plants. Sometimes one finds heavy elephants, quite alone, as mossy and as rough skinned as if alive; they mingle with the tangled vines, the grasses reach their bellies,

flowers and leaves cover them, and even when their debris shall have returned to the earth they will be no more completely absorbed by the intoxication of the forest.

The whole of Indian genius lies in this never-satisfied need for setting matter in motion, in this acceptance of

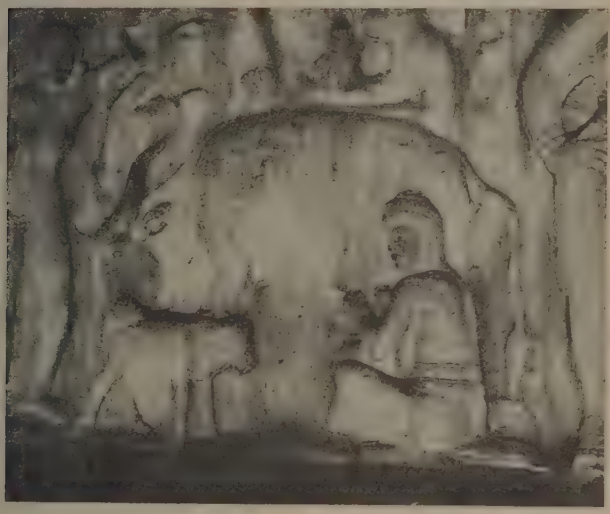


AMRAVATI. Women in adoration.

the elements offered by matter, in this indifference to the fate of the forms that it has drawn from matter. Before the art that reveals to us this genius, one must not look for the expression which the Egyptian gave to his metaphysical system, an expression that was imposed, perhaps, upon the sculptor, but was none the less real; we must not look for the free expression of a social philosophy, as among the Greeks. What we have here is the dark and troubled expression—anonymous and profound, but immeasurably strong for that very reason—of the intuitive pantheism of the Indian. Man is no longer at the center of life. He

BHUWANESWAR (VI Century). The great temple, detail.

is no longer that flower of the whole world, which has slowly set itself to form and mature him. He is mingled with all things, he is on the same plane with all things, he is a particle of the infinite, neither more

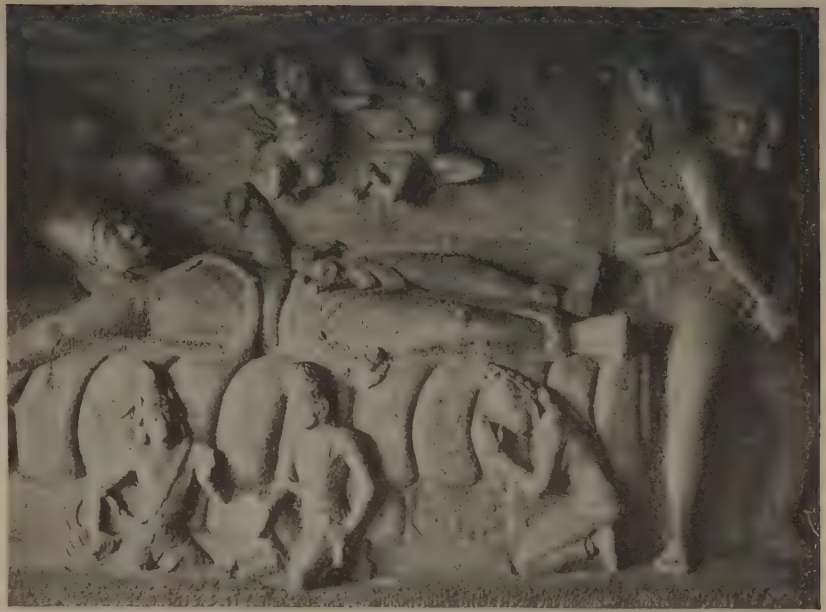


MAHAVELLIPORE (VIII Century). Monolithic temple. Milking.

nor less important than the other particles of the infinite. The earth passes into the trees, the trees into the fruits, the fruits into man or the animal, man and the animal into the earth; the circulation of life sweeps along and propagates a confused universe wherein forms arise for a second, only to be engulfed and then to reappear, overlapping one another, palpitating, penetrating one another as they surge like the waves. Man does not know whether yesterday he was not the very tool with which he himself will force matter to release the form that he may have to-

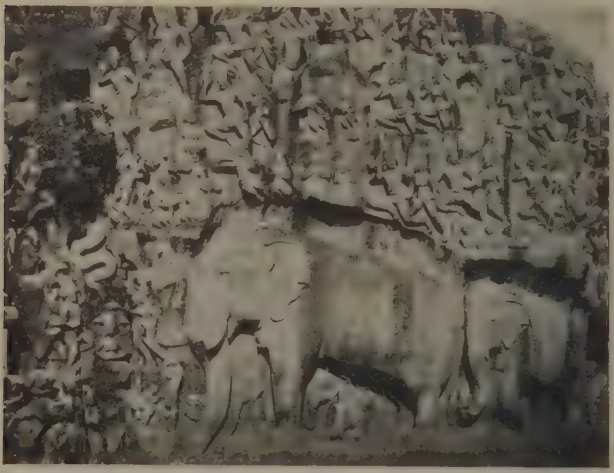
morrow. Everything is merely an appearance, and under the diversity of appearances Brahma, the spirit of the world, is a unity. To be sure, man has the mystical intuition of universal transformism. Through transmigrations, by passing from one appearance to another, and by raising within himself, through suffering and combat, the moving level of life, he will doubtless be pure enough one day to annihilate himself in Brahma. But, lost as he is in the ocean of mingled forms and energies, does he know whether he is still a form or a spirit? Is that thing before us a thinking being, a living being even, a planet, or a being cut in stone? Germination and putrefaction are engendered unceasingly. Everything has its heavy movement, expanded matter beats like a heart. Does not wisdom consist in submerging oneself in it, in order to taste the intoxication of the unconscious as one gains possession of the force that stirs in matter?

In the virgin forests of the south, between the heat of the sun and the fever of the soil, faith caused the temples to spring two hundred feet into the air, multiplied them from generation to generation, and surrounded them with ever-growing inclosures, whose position was constantly changed. Such an architecture could not issue from a source less powerful and less dim than the grottos hollowed out of the depths of the rocks. Artificial mountains were raised up, graded pyramids, wherein the thicket of forms moves as if alive. One is tempted to say that there was no plan for the construction of these forests of gods, as they bristle like cactus and evil plants, as they present profiles like the backs of primitive monsters. They seem to have been thrust up from the crust of the earth as if by the force of lava. It must have required ten thousand laborers, working together and by their own inspiration, but united by their fanaticism



GROTTOS OF MAHAVELLIPORE (VIII Century). The Sleep of Buddha.

and their desires, to build these titanic platforms, carve them from top to bottom, cover them with statues as dense as the lives of the jungle, and support them in space on the aërial festoon of the lacelike ogives and the inextricable scaffolding of the columns. Here are statues upon statues, colonnades upon colonnades; thirty styles are mingled, juxtaposed, super-



MAHAVELLIPORE (VIII Century). Bas-relief on the rock.

imposed. The columns may be round or square or polygonal, in sections or monolithic, smooth or fluted or covered with carving that has an appearance of danger, like masses of reptiles moving in oily circles, like pustules that throb and rise, like bubbles bursting under leaves spread over a heavy water. There, as everywhere in India, the infinitely little touches the infinitely big. Whatever the power of these temples, they seem to have sprung from the earth through the power of

the seasons, and at the same time to have been carved out minutely like an ivory sculpture.

MAHAVELLIPORE (VIII Century). Monolithic temple. Bas-relief on a wall, detail.

Forms are everywhere, tufted bas-reliefs are everywhere, from the surroundings of the temples to their summit, on the inner walls, and often on the top of the

columns where the whole of humanity, mingled with the whole of animal life, supports the burden of the entablatures and the roofs. Everything may serve to carry a statue, everything may swell into a figure—the capitals, the pediments, the columns, the upper stages of the pyramids, the steps, the balustrades, the banisters of stairways. Formidable groups rise and fall—rearing horses, warriors, human beings in clusters like grapes, eruptions of bodies piled one over the other, trunks and branches that are alive, crowds sculptured by a single movement as if spouting from one matrix. One has the impression that the old monolithic temple has been violently twirled and shot out of the earth. Save in the more recent epochs when he modeled bronzes of astonishing tenderness, firmness, and elegance, the Indian has never conceived sculpture as being able to live independent of the construction that it decorates. It seems a confused mass of buds on the body of a heavy plant.

III

Even out of doors, even in the full daylight, these forms are surrounded by a mysterious obscurity. The torsos, the arms, the legs, and the heads commingle—when a statue itself has not twenty arms, ten legs, four or five faces, when it is not laden with all these aspects of tenderness and fury by which life reveals itself. The depths of the sculpture undulate heavily, as if to force back into the moving eternity of primitive matter the still unformed beings that attempt to emerge from it. We see writhing larvæ, vague embryos; they seem incessant and successive attempts at gestation which start and miscarry in the intoxication and fever of a soil that continually creates.

As one views this sculpture from near by one must

ELEPHANTA (VIII Century). Colossal head.

not attempt to find in it the scientific modeling of the Egyptians or the philosophic modeling of Phidias, although Egypt and, to a greater degree, the Greece brought in by Alexander, profoundly influenced the first Buddhistic sculptors, perhaps even to the extent of revealing them to themselves. Sculpture is no longer considered in its planes and its passages, save summarily and by instinct. It might better be defined in terms of painting, for in these gigantic bas-reliefs light and shade play a vital and continuous part, as if a brush moved over them to soften and caress them. But Hindu painting, itself, while preserving the qualities of materiality that are in the sculpture, is perhaps more purified by the mind. The painting is usually the work of the monks; Buddhism has left a clear imprint on it. And later on it is especially in painting that, when Islam arrives, the influence of Persia makes itself felt. From the great Buddhistic decorations to the Mussulman miniatures, the spiritualization of the work sometimes touches the rarest, the highest, the most human harmony. One may not assign a place lower than that of the great classic works to the frescoes of Ajunta, in which the lyrical pantheism of the Hindus seems to fuse, for an hour, the spiritual radiance of Egyptian paintings and the moral intoxication of the old Chinese artists. By a kind of ethnic paradox the great painting of India would seem nearer to the linear rhythms, which are the chief preoccupation of the Egyptian or Greek sculptors, than Hindu sculpture itself, for the latter seeks to transfer to stone or metal the fleeting, flowing modeling of the painter. When we compare this sculpture with that of the anonymous workmen of Thebes or with that of the Athenian masters, we find something in it that is absolutely new, that is difficult to define—something like the obscure fermentation in a crucible, as compared with the

TANJORE (XI Century). The Pagoda.

limpidity of a theorem. The modeling aims at movement rather than at form. It is never considered in an isolated way nor in its abstract relationships with the neighboring figures. Material passages unite the figures among themselves; they are always heavy with atmosphere; the background is always felt; other figures partly absorb them; the modeling is fluctuating and billowy, like the mass of the leaves when labored by the wind. What models the rock, what rolls it into storm waves, is desire and despair and enthusiasm. It undulates like a crowd ravished by voluptuousness and fury. It swells and grows tense like the torso of a woman as she feels the approach of love.

As we have observed, it is the movement and not the form that interests the Indian sculptor, and so we do not find him seeking harmonies of relationships or clearly stated abstractions, but expressive masses which give an intoxicated, florid image of the whole world, and no longer seek for an equilibrium between the laws of the universe and the laws of the mind. By flashes, veiled by obscurity and by torpor, one can doubtless find everything in this art, overlapping the neighboring element, oppressing it or being oppressed by it; one can meet with brief jets of consciousness and sudden starts from the most rudimentary realism to the highest idealism. When one sees them isolated one notes the special quality of the figures, especially the figures of women, innumerable, gentle, religious, and yet formidable in their grace, their sensuality, their carnal heaviness. At every moment they give evidence of the effort—gigantic, vague, but often of a mighty fervor—toward a higher adaptation to their role in humanity. The man of India loves to see the waist bend under the weight of the breasts and the haunches, he likes long tapering

DELHI (XII Century). Jain Colonnade. (*Mosque of Koutab.*)

forms and the single wave of the muscles as a movement surges through the whole body. But this hymn to the more tender forms of beauty is lost in the clamor of the universe. At one and the same time he can

The Dance of Shiva (XII Century). Bronze, detail. (*Museum of Madras.*)

adore Indra, the supreme being; Brahma, the creator; Shiva, the destroyer; Krishna, the redeemer; Surya, the light of day; Lakshmi, who is love; Sarvasti, who is science; and the horrible Kali seated in putrefaction and the clotted blood of his victims. He can adore the ten incarnations of Vishnu and the crowd of heroes and monsters of his immense mythology and of the national epics, Ravana, Sougriva, Hanoumat, and Ananta. He can invoke Rama, the incorruptible hero who would have led the Greeks to the threshold of

divinity. Rama is only one idol more in the prodigious pantheon, an idol lost among the gods of fecundity and death. On his walls he can bring together ferocity and indulgence, asceticism and lubricity, fornications and apostleships; he can mingle obscenity and heroism. Heroism and obscenity appear no more important in the life of the universe than the fighting or mating of a pair of insects in the woods. Everything is on the same plane. Why not let instinct spread out through nature with the indifference of the elemental forces and, in its onrush, sweep away moralities and systems? Social idealism is vain. Impassible eternity wears away the long effort of man. The Indian artist has not the time to bring the human form to its realization. Everything that it contains is contained as possibility. A prodigious life animates it —an embryonic life, however, and one that seems

LAKSHMI, bronze (XIV Century). (*Private Collection.*)

condemned never to choose between the confused solicitations of the energies of the will and the energies of the senses. Man will change nothing of his final destiny, which is to return sooner or later to the unconscious and the formless. In the fury of the senses or

Gwalior (xv Century). The Palace.

the immobility of contemplation, he must therefore descend unresistingly into the chaos of the elements.

The withdrawal of the Indian soul from preoccupation with morality, its pantheistic confusion and disorder, cut it off almost constantly from the great abstract constructions that characterize the aspiration of the ancient peoples of the Occident. In India, the eye does not seize things in their ensemble until it has taken in all their details. In Egypt, the desert, the horizon, and the straight line of the river, as in Greece the winding bays, the transparent waters, and the clear-cut crests of the hills, had made of man a meta-

physician or a philosopher, loving the rhythm or the sinuous continuity that he observed in the universe; but here it required too many days to reach the mountains, the rivers were too vast and too muddy for one to see to their depths, the forests were too dense to

BINDERABUND (XVI Century). A temple.

permit the eye to take in at once the harmonious line of the trees, the outline of their leaves, the true form of the creeping animals that appear only in a flash, to flee from death or to inflict it. Man is surrounded by an unpassable barrier of luxuriant life, the eye is dazzled by the ceaselessly broken and mingled colors and lines of flowers that rain sparkling dust, of vines, of beasts fantastically marked; one is caught up in the feverish spirit of the germs of life and death that roll under the ocean of leaves. The disorder of the material world of the Indian intoxicates his soul and brings him

to that pantheistic mysticism that every sensual being can feel rising within him in supreme moments of love, when, through the embrace of the woman who yields to him, he feels the confused and real presence of the universe. In the architecture of India we must not seek that linear abstraction which, by its continuity, expresses the visible rhythm of life; what is sought and found is life itself, gathered up hastily and pressed pell-mell into form. It is part of the quivering skin of the earth from which it was torn. The unity of the world is expressed in it by the heaping up at one point in space of everything that belongs to life, from the densely populated soil to the solitude of the heavens, and from the motionless mountains to the roll of the seas.

IV

However, to the north and the northeast of India, in the regions where the forests are less heavy, where the glaciers are nearer, and the jungle is cut into here and there by great desert spaces, the synthesis was infinitely less instinctive, more abstract, and therefore more sober. It was by this route, indeed, that Greece had entered India, as Rome came later, and Byzantium and Persia which, from the depths of its history, brought the memory of Assyria, of Chaldea, and perhaps of Egypt. With Persia also came Islam, a spiritualizing force that did not love the images and despised the idols. Finally, by way of Lisbon and Venice, there came the Occident of the Gothic age and of the Renaissance. But India is a crucible so ebullient in its heat that for centuries it forced Islam to submit to its genius, to cover the walls of its mosques with living arabesques —lotus, flowering vines, figures of men and of monsters. The Greek statue, hastily imitated by the first sculp-

tors, was forgotten as quickly as it had become known. The disquieting elegance of the works that it inspired was only a prelude to the retaliation soon to be made by a sensuality impossible to restrain. Though captivated for a moment by the unbounded grace and

INDO-MUSSULMAN ART (XVII Century). The Taj-Mahal of Agra.

reason of the Greeks, India was to manifest its own power through the wandering smile of the mouths, through the smothered flame, the enervation, and the ascetic thinness of the bodies. When northern India carried its religion into the south, it also brought with it the pure column that had supported the luminous pediments on all the acropolises of the Occident. But the column was to be overwhelmed by the extravagant growth of the living forests of stone. India assimilated everything, transformed everything, submerged everything under the mounting tide of her ever-moving

force. Grandiose civilizations passed over her and sowed her deserts and her woods with the cadavers of cities. What matter? Here neither time counts, nor men. Evolution returns upon itself at every moment. Like a sea, the Hindu soul is eternally mobile, between fixed shores. At no moment can one say, here the race ascends, here is its apogee, here its fall. In the crucible some substances melt, others are liquid and burning, and others cold and hard. India is the enigma, the protean, unseizable being without beginning and without end, without laws and without purposes, mingled with everything and yet alone in the intoxication which she cannot exhaust.

Thus the aristocratic and more abstract art of the north, although we may find in it traces of the Mediterranean civilizations, from Chaldea and Egypt to feudal and neopagan Europe, remains at bottom as Indian as the art of the Dravidians of the south. As it rises from the Dekkan toward the Himalayas, the pyramid becomes rounder. In central India its lines become curves, and though it is still striped like the skin of the tigers, it is less laden with ornaments and is almost without statues. In the valley of the Ganges, the curvature, upon contact with the Persian dome, is more pronounced and the vault, built of flat stones in tiers, takes on the form of the cupola or of the kiosk, supported by frail pillars hemispherical, ovoid, stocky, pressed down or swelling out, polygonal or circular, sometimes bare like those of the mosques, or carved and capped with turbans like those of the Dravidian pyramids—the domes look like enormous fat tubercles bulging with spongy matter. The form is just such a one as Indian sensualism has at all times desired. India, land of ruins that it is, must have seen the complete disappearance, a thousand years before our era, of edifices that much resembled those forests of bul-

bous domes, temples, or mausoleums that she was still building in our day. The Ramayana speaks frequently of "palaces whose white peaks foam into heaps of cloud."

Even before the domination of the Great Moguls,

Miniature of the XVII Century. (*Private Collection.*)

the Tartar emperors, who came at the beginning of modern times to impose order and peace on northern

India, the temple of the basin of the Ganges already had, despite its wealth of ornament, a character of equilibrium and of abstract unity that one never finds in the south. The sensualism of the Indians, which caused the southern sculptors to enter the mountains, germinates in the consciousness of the north in trage-

TRICHINOPOLY (XVIII Century). Pagoda of Sriringam.

dies, in poems, in hymns of words and of stone. But if the walls are barer, the forms more peaceful and retiring, if there are longer silences, and if the dome is more abstractly calculated, the temple receives its visitors with more reserve, the mystic intoxication is less heavy. In the south what spoke was the profound soul of India, a wild murmur which we hear throughout the whole existence of this people, and which breaks out spontaneously at every place that it inhabits. In the north the voice of the higher castes dominates the chorus of the people, and does so with infinitely more majesty, power, and splendor because these castes grew from the soil of India like a natural vegetation and because they were able to build up the

TRICHINOPOLY (XVIII Century). Pagoda of Sriringam.
(*The Court of the Horses.*)

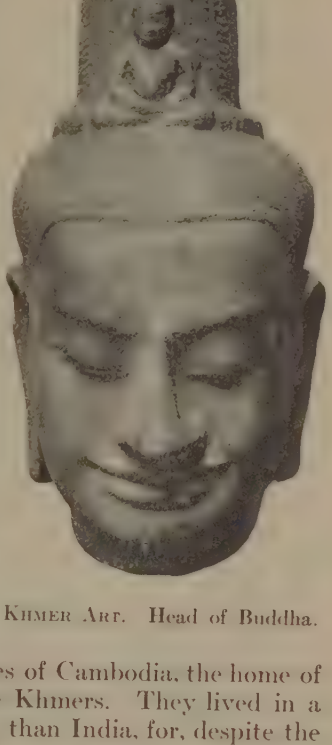
most grandiose philosophic synthesis that man has ever conceived.

The sensual richness of the south, purified by the metaphysical spirit and rarefied by the aristocratic spirit, is found again in the details of ornament in the sanctuaries, as soon as one has crossed their threshold. The Jain temples of central India have pillars as finely cut as glassware, and the arches that carry their forests of white cupolas to the heavens turn into lace under the hands of the sculptors; and yet, despite the over-minute science of the decorators, these buildings express a living faith. In the monarchies of the north, on the contrary, the vanity of the rajahs throws so luxurious a garment over the artists' enthusiasm that its bareness and also the best of its human value are lost together. There are temples stuffed with gods of silver and gold, whose eyes are rubies or diamonds. Drops of fire gleam in the shadows; the royal robe of the tigers, the iridescent plumage of tropical forests, their flowers, and the shining tails of peacocks incrust the sheathing of metal, ivory, or enamel that covers the pillars and the walls with emeralds, amethysts, pearls, topazes, and sapphires. It is an art of externals, and its unvarying magnificence is of a paler light than that of statues in a temple underground. The spirit of feudal India is rather in the great rectangular castles, bare and austere, closed in like fortresses, defended by high towers, and cuirassed with polychromed enamel; it is in the palaces of white marble by the silent waters.

V

The Occident of the Middle Ages, the Occident of the fortresses and the Romanesque buildings, is certainly less out of place in the hierarchical India of the

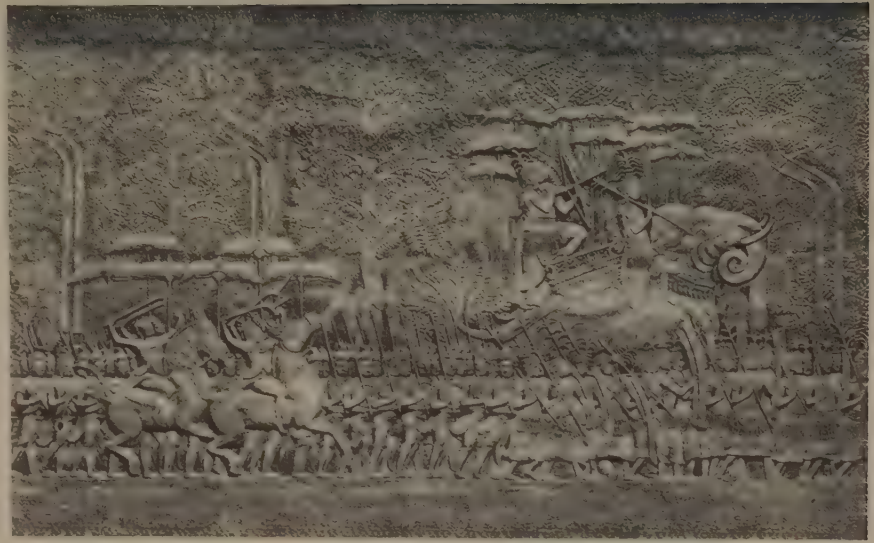
north than in the democratic India of the south. In one place as in the other, the abstraction descends from the dominating classes to crush the miserable classes beneath the petrified symbol of its external power. But the Hellenic Occident where, on the contrary, the abstraction rose from the masses to express its inner power through the voice of the heroes—the Hellenic Occident and also the Gothic Occident would more easily recognize the trace of their dream if they followed the torrent of ideas that crossed the mountains, the swamps, the virgin forests, and the sea, to spread to the peninsula of Indo-China, to the Dutch Indies, and to Java. The spread of Indian ideas is witnessed in the gigantic temples that cover Java; it is seen even more in the fortresses, the palaces, and the temples absorbed little by little by the jungles of Cambodia, the home of the mysterious race of the Khmers. They lived in a country less overwhelming than India, for, despite the denseness of the forests, the undergrowth was certainly less redoubtable, the fruits were more abundant, the rivers more full of fish, and life was easier and freer. Moreover, the metaphysical and moral life of China had



KHMER ART. Head of Buddha.

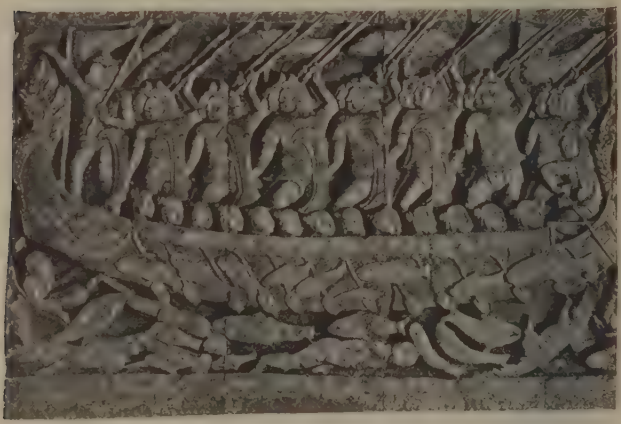
come to give something of its peace to the troubled and heavy atmosphere of tropical nature. Finally, five or six hundred years after the disappearance of Buddhism from Hindustan, perhaps about the tenth century of our era, the Khmer people were still Buddhists, as were the people of Java. Among the latter the decorative sculpture of eastern Asia, sending forth one of its most heavily laden branches, causes the monuments of Java to blossom from top to bottom with bas-reliefs as mobile as paintings. The moral epic of Buddha unrolls in them amid perfumed forests crowded with fruit, with birds, and with beasts, among choruses and musicians who furnish accompaniment to the nonchalant and lascivious grace of the women that pray and dance and people the intoxicated sleep of the god with abundant dreams. But the Khmer people, in its Buddhism, betokened a preoccupation with moral balance and with harmony that is practically unknown to the sculptors of the grottos of Ellora and of the pyramidal temples.

The orgy of ornament, to be sure, never went farther. This was a necessary result of the still denser, more flowery, and more populous forests of the country, of the humidity which is warmer, and of the fever which is more intoxicating. But the ornament obeys a splendidly balanced rhythm. Twining lines of flowers, of fruits, of vines, of palms, and rich plants creep over the walls from top to bottom, over the sloping surfaces, over the tops of the doors, and up to the summit of the four sides of the high tiaras of Brahma which here replace the Indo-Persian cupola and the Dravidian pyramid; but the decorative forms marry so well with the line of the architecture that they lighten it and seem to lift it to an aërial level of leaves, of winding stems, of hanging foliage that together form a silent, whirling rain of petals and perfumes.



KHMER ART. The procession, bas-relief. (*Palace of Angkor-Vat.*)

The Khmer sculptor gives a form to all those things which, as a rule, strike our inner sensibility only through what we hear, what we taste, and what we feel. His carving tells of the murmurs, the gleams, and the odors of the forest, the cadenced sound of marching



KHMER ART. The rowers, bas-relief. (*Palace of Angkor-Vat.*)

troops, low tones of birds that coo their love song, the hoarse, dull rattle in the throats of wild beasts as they roam through the jungles, and the invisible fluid that circulates in the nerves of the women who dance when the music drones and when voluptuous feeling mounts in their veins. The secret heart of the world beats, tumultuously and regularly, in the crowds that pass under impenetrable branches, whether they sing all together or prepare for massacres or the feast, for death, for justice, or for the building of palaces. And yet, in that inner order which gives these sculptural symphonies so much rhythmical strength, everything interpenetrated without a break. The transmigration of the

thinkers of India causes the rock itself to quiver. Animal forms and vegetable forms pass one into the other, vines blossom into figures; reptiles, feet, and hands sprout and become lotus flowers. What matter? The luxuriant universe is good, since the divine countenance of him who consoles appears behind every leaf,

KHMER ART. Frieze of the Apsaras, fragment. (*Palace of Angkor-Vat.*)

since he loved everything, down to the snakes themselves. The heroes, the elephants, and the tigers that guard the temples or border the avenues, the immense cobras with seven heads stretched out, that frame the pediments or creep along the balustrades, have an indulgent visage and a welcoming smile, despite their clubs, their claws, and their teeth. Buddha is all love. The forces of the earth have penetrated him to spread humanity throughout his being. And so, on the highest branch of black trees, full of poisonous juices and swarming from roots to leaves with beasts that distil death, there is a flower.

The story of Sakyamuni, from his birth to his sleep in Nirvana, flowers on the walls of the sanctuaries. The Khmer sculptor grows tender over the god man of the Orient even as, at about the same time, the Gothic artisan grows tender as he recounts the birth and passion of the god man of the Occident. Everywhere we find smiles of goodness, everywhere open arms, heads inclining on friendly shoulders, hands clasping gently, and the ingenuous impulse toward abandon and confidence. Man is everywhere in search of man. The spirit of evil, Ravana, with the hundred hands from which plants and grasses are born, whose feet traverse forests peopled with animals — the spirit of evil may come upon the scene, innumerable figures of men may struggle under avalanches of flowers, like the spirit besieged by the seductions of the earth. What matter? Against backgrounds of heavy trees, armies march. Rama advances across forests. Man will end by attaining, were it only for a moment, the accord between his social life and his most tyrannical instincts. Neither bestiality nor asceticism. Not only are the heroes of the will surrounded by friendly flowers and the fruits they may easily pluck from the branches that bend over their passing, but there are even gar-

KHMER ART. Decorative figure. (*Angkor-Thom.*)

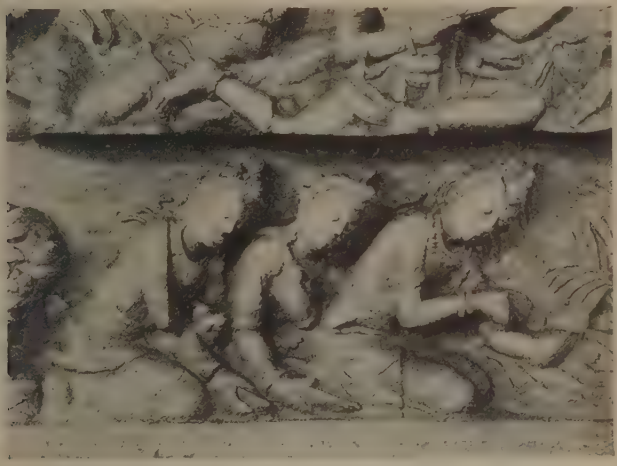
JAVA (IX Century?). The musicians. Detail from the life of Buddha.
(*Temple of Boro-Boudour.*)

lands of naked bayaderes who await them at the end of their road, each one different and all the same, dancing yet almost motionless, as they mark the rhythm of the music that one guesses, the inner pulsation of the wave that runs through them. For the second time since the origin of man, intellectual effort and the joy of the senses seem to agree for the space of an hour. Furtive, no doubt, and more summary, but also fuller, more musical, more clogged with matter, heavier laden, and moving against a background of trees and flowers, the modeling of Greece seems to suggest itself here and there.

JAVA (IX Century?). Detail from the life of Buddha. (*Temple of Boro-Boudour.*)

Thus, eternally balanced between its heroism and its sensuality, passing at every moment and without transition from the extreme of moral love to the extreme of material intoxication, from the highest aristocracy of culture to the most impulsive satisfactions of instinct, the Indian soul wanders across living forests of sentiment and system in search of the law. In its ensemble, and in spite of its oases of hope and of cool sentiment, it is pessimistic and cruel. The men of India have no more need to inflict pain or death than other men. They are of the true human clay; they

are kneaded with weakness, they are armored with iron and gold, they are swept along to love at one moment, to death at another, according as the air they breathe brings them the odor of the trees, of the oceans, or of the deserts. In every case, here as elsewhere, the

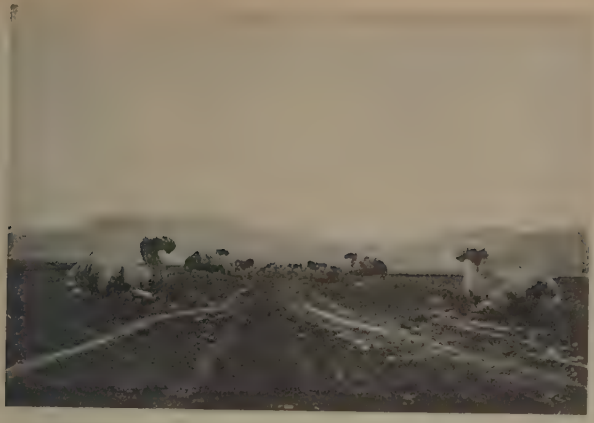


JAVA (IX Century?). Detail from the life of Buddha, bas-relief. (*Temple of Boro-Boudour.*)

loftiest energy and brute matter wed constantly. The manifestations of instinct, which is hurled with all its strength into the immensity of life, arouse the loftiest sentiment of superior natures. If, after much suffering, the Indian sages rise above good and evil to gain indifference, it is because the crowd, in India, had plunged into the intoxication or the horror of life without knowing either good or evil.

As balance, for them, could be realized only at brief moments in the average life of society, they sought it

outside the conditions of that society, in the bosom of an immeasurable harmony, where life and death, whose origins and ends we do not know, mingle their equal powers and know no other limits than themselves. Let life, then, exhaust itself with living until death comes! Let death, in its putrefaction, cause life to flower and reflower! Why should one try to infuse the energies of nature into the harmony of consciousness? Disciplined for a moment, the energies of nature will take the upper hand again, and once more will roll the will and the hopes of man into the confused intoxication of their regenerated youth.



Road of the Ming Tombs

Chapter II. CHINA

I

N India, it is still ourselves that we see. If the grandiose pessimism, which makes her plastic language so intoxicating, opens up to us regions in ourselves that we had not explored, it dominates us from the first, because the rhythm of that language relates it, secretly, with all those other languages that express Occidental optimism. In China, on the contrary, we no longer understand. Although it includes a third of mankind, this country is the most distant, the most isolated of all. We are confronted with a method that escapes us almost absolutely, with a point of departure that is not ours, with a goal that does not resemble ours, with a movement of life that has neither the same appearance nor the same direction as ours. To realize unity in the

spirit is, doubtless, what the Chinese tends toward, as we do. But he does not seek that unity along the roads where we seek it.

China has not, however, remained as closed as it is said to have been. It mingled with Aryanism incessantly, to the point of producing mixed civilizations, as in Indo-China and in Tibet, for example, where it allowed the rivers of love pouring from the Hindu soul to carry a little of their disquieting ardor into its serious, positive, easy-going, and rather sullen soul. It knew the worlds that were the farthest removed from it, and the most ancient. Rome trafficked with it two thousand years ago; Chaldea, twenty centuries before Rome, taught it astronomy. Nearer to our time, Islam affected it to the point of bringing twenty or thirty millions of Chinese to the god of Mohammed. In the sixteenth century, after the Mongol conquest, Pekin was perhaps the most cosmopolitan and the most open city in the world. The Portuguese and the Venetians sent their merchants there, and the imperial court had artists and savants come from India, from Persia, and even from western Europe.

However, as far back as we look into the past of China, it seems not to have moved. The myth period of its life ends about the century of Pericles, perhaps; the apogee of its vital power oscillates between the fifth and the fifteenth century of our era, its decline begins at the hour when the Occident is about to put its stamp on history. But one must look closely to distinguish one or another of these phases of its activity. The material testimony of its legendary period that comes down to us does not differ very greatly from what it is producing in our own day, and if its most vigorous effort coincides with that of the Middle Ages of the Occident, the fact would seem to demonstrate only the more clearly—through the insensible passages

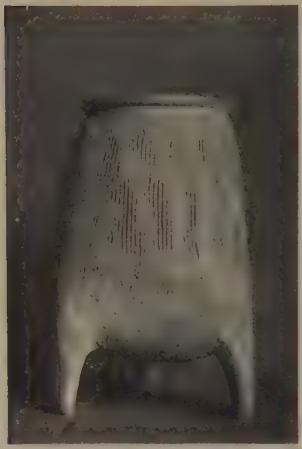
that attach it to its past and its present—that it has never come out of its own Middle Ages and that we do not know when it entered upon them. In reality, it is the inner world of the Chinese that has never opened for us. It is in vain that we feel their social civilization as more perfect than our own, it is in vain that we

Chang Dynasty (xviii to xii Centuries B.C.). Daiban bowl, bronze. (*Musée Cernuschi.*)

admire the results among them of a moral effort that was as great as our own. We do not always understand them better than we do the ants or the bees. There is the same mystery, awe inspiring and almost sacred. Why are we so made that we can conceive only of our own mode of association and only our own mechanism of reasoning? Whether the Chinese is superior to us or inferior is something that it is impossible for us to say, and the problem, thus presented, is without sig-

nificance. The Chinese has followed an evolution that we have not followed; he constitutes a second branch of the human tree that separated from the first; we do not know whether their branches will reunite.

The Indo-European world turns, with all its instinct, toward the future. The Chinese world, with all its consciousness, turns toward the past. Therein lies the gulf which, perhaps, cannot be crossed. There is the whole secret of the power of expansion of the Occident, of the hermitism of China, of the strange impersonality of its plastic language. Taken in the mass, China shows no change in time, no movement in space. One would say that it expresses a people of old men, ossified from infancy. It is never to himself that the Chinese looks for his law; it is to his father, to his grandfather, and, beyond his father and grandfather, to the infinite multitude of the dead who govern him from the depths of the centuries. And in fact, it is not the law that he asks, but the recipe for adapting himself to the surroundings that nature has made for him, surroundings, moreover, which change but little.

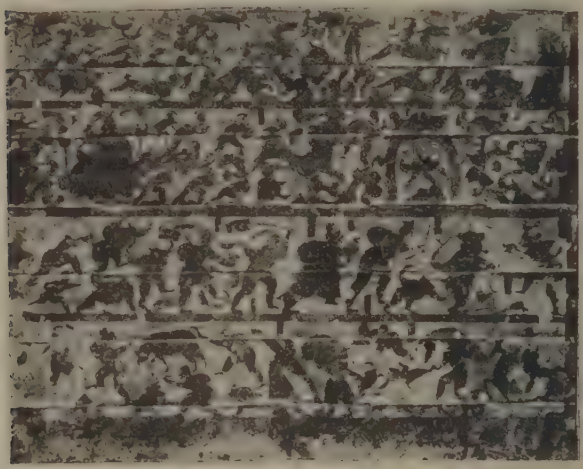


CHOW ART (VII Century B.C.). Tripod, terra cotta. (*Charles Vignier Collection.*)

At first, one thinks of Egypt, of its geological and agricultural immobility, of its impersonal, collective art, hermetical and abstract. But Egypt is restless; it cannot quench the flame that, despite the will of the

HAN ART (from the II Century B.C. to the II Century A.D.).
Tiger, marble, guardian of the temple of Sniang-fou.
(*Charles Vignier Collection.*)

people, bursts from the heart of the material in which they worked with such passion. An invincible idealism crowded them to a horizon which was distasteful for them to behold. The Chinese also evolved under outside influence, unquestionably, but around the same



Han Art (from the II Century B.C. to the II Century A.D.). Bas-relief of Ou-Lang-Tse, print of the stone. (*Ed. Chavannes Mission.*)

fixed point. He remained practical and self-centered, narrowly realistic, devoid of imagination, and, in reality, without desires. Where the Egyptian people suffers from the domination of the priest and tries to forget him by exploring life in its depths, the Chinese accepts without revolt the tyranny—the benevolent tyranny, we may observe—of the mandarin, because it in no wise disturbs the doting satisfaction of his tastes. At least, we know nothing of the immemorial evolutions

which must have led him to that state of mind. Confucius regulated morality once for all; it remained fixed in very accessible formulas and kept to its traditional rut through the unquestioning, dogmatic respect, ritualized and blind, that one owes to one's parents, to the parents of one's parents, to the dead parents of one's ancestors. The upward movement, which characterizes life for us and prevents us from arresting it in a definite formula, crystallized, for the Chinese, into a form which is perhaps not always the same, but through which one gets back to the same principle, a form determined by this principle to the minutest detail. The Chinese is satisfied with it, he has no need to seek any other principle. In reality, if he remains motionless, it is because he has so many native virtues and because his imagination atrophies through never having to exert itself or to struggle. He will receive without difficulty the moral teachings of Buddhism and later on of Islam, because they are practically in agreement with the essential part of what Confucius brought to him. In the religion of Confucius he will find even the belief in Nirvana of the one and the fatalism of the other, and they will cause

Art Later than Han (III to IV Century A.D.). Ovoid vase with screw decoration. (*Charles Vignier Collection.*)

him to lull into indifference whatever momentary impulses toward revolt he may have.

As far back as we go into the distant childhood of China, we find the race already molded to certain metaphysical abstractions and certain moral entities from which all later forms of expression will descend. The Aryan goes from the concrete to the abstract, the Chinese from the abstract to the concrete. With the Aryan, the general idea is the flower of objective observation, and abstraction is always a thing in process of evolution. With the Chinese, the general idea seems to precede the objective study of the world and the progress of the abstraction ends sharply as soon as a moral law sufficient to sustain social relationships has appeared to the philosopher. In the Occident the symbol comes out of life, and frees itself from life, little by little, through progressive generalizations which are forever broadening, or which start out anew on other bases. In China the symbol governs life and shuts it in from every side.

The ever-changing reality which the Occidental desires, the idealistic conquest which tempts him, and man's attempt to rise toward harmony, intelligence, and morality seem to remain unsuspected by the Chinese. He has found, at least he thinks he has found, his mode of social relationships. Why should he change? When we denounce his absence of idealism, perhaps we are only saying that his old ideal realized its promises long ago and that he enjoys the unique privilege of maintaining himself in the moral citadel of which he has been able to gain possession, while, around him, everything ebbs away, decomposes, and re-forms itself. However that may be, we shall never see him approach form with the desire to make it express the adaptation by the human being of his intellect and his senses to surrounding nature. That

Buddhist Art (Wei) (v Century, second half). Kwan-Yn, soft stone. (*Charles Vignier Collection.*)

is what the whole of ancient art and the whole of Renaissance art did, but when the Chinese turns to form, it is with the will to draw from it a tangible symbol of his moral adaptation. He will always aim at moral expression, and will do so without requiring the world to furnish him with other elements than those which he knows in advance he will find in it; he will require no new revelations from the gestures which translate it. Morality will be crystallized in the sentences that guide him. He has only to treat nature as a dictionary whose pages he will turn until he finds the physiognomies and the forms which, in their combination, are the proper ones to fix the teachings of the sages. The agitation of the senses no longer comes upon him save by surprise when he studies the elements of the plastic transposition too closely, and his science of form, detached wholly from material things, no longer serves him for more than the defining of abstractions. His immobile art demonstrates acquired truth, instead of affirming new intuitions.

To sum up, the Chinese does not study the material of the world that he may ask it to instruct him. He studies it when he needs to objectify his beliefs in order to attach more firmly to them the men who share them. It is true that he brings to this study gifts of patience, tenacity, and slowness which are beyond comparison. The ancient gropings of the first Chinese artists escape us. . . . One would say that for ten or twenty centuries they studied, in secret, the laws of form before demanding of form that it express the laws of the spirit.

II

In China, plastic expression is a kind of conventional graphology analogous to writing. The first Chinese painters were the Buddhist monks who, in the course

of the same centuries in which the Christian monks were gathering up the debris of the mind of antiquity, cultivated in their monasteries the only flower of high

Buddhist Art (Wei) (v Century). Grottos of Yunkang. The great Buddha.
(*Ed. Chavannes Mission.*)

idealism that blossomed on this immovable soil for thirty centuries; and note that these first Chinese painters were also writers. There were no other painters than the poets, and they painted and wrote with the same brush and caused the poem and the

image to comment one on the other interminably. The ideographic signs which required a lifetime to learn and which were clothed in a kind of spiritual beauty that the artists seized in the tenuity, the thickness, or the complexity of the black arabesques with which they covered the white paper, brought them

Buddhist Art (Wei) (v Century). Grottos of Yunkang. Bas-relief. (*Ed. Chavannes Mission.*)

little by little to handle the brush dipped in India ink with consummate ease. Whenever their poetry, born of the same current of feeling as the painting, had felt the freshness and the calm of the world around the monasteries, isolated in the upper valleys, the painters who commented upon this poetry looked upon the world with an innocence that had never before been permitted, by their traditional philosophy, to Chinese artists. Landscape, that instrument of liberation and conquest, appeared to them suddenly. And at that

Buddhist Art (v Century). Bas-relief on rock. Grottos of Yunkang. (*Ed. Chavannes Mission.*)

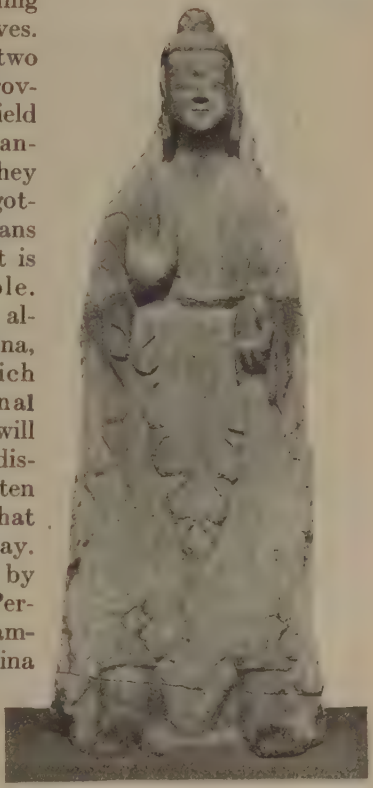
moment the Buddhist soul found in them its most serene expression.[1]

Never did the Chinese painters, despite the brevity of their style, go so far as their pupils, the artists of Nippon, in the schematized stylization of nature. Here there was no question of decorating houses or temples. They illustrated poems for themselves, in that profoundly gentle and yet profoundly egoistic spirit of the anchorite who has attained to peace from the life of the passions. The agitation of the cities did not reach them. The images, which they traced on the silk with a minuteness that knew no lassitude, or which they slowly brought to birth from the dabs of ink that their brush pressed into the rice paper, often expressed nothing but the inner peace of the philosopher as he thumbs the writings of the sages, amid indulgent trees or at the edge of pure waters. They heard no other sounds than those of the torrents in the mountain or the bleating of the herds. They loved the hours when the day is undefined, the glow of moonlight nights, the hesitation of the middle seasons, the mists that mount at dawn from the flooded rice fields.[2] They had gathered a freshness of soul like that of the morning in which the birds intoxicate themselves.

It is almost impossible to consider Chinese painting according to that harmonious curve which, in the case of almost all the other schools, seems to sum up all the elements of the work: from its beginning, through the progressive expansion of the elements later on into a balanced expression, and, later still, to their disorder and their dispersal. According to the place, according to the circumstances, the aspect of a century will change. Here, for example, Buddhistic hieratism will not appear. There, it will be prolonged up to the threshold of the modern world, isolated in some region

[1] M. Paléologue, *L'Art Chinois.* [2] *Ibid.*

that lies far away from the centers of life, or, in the depths of some well-guarded cloister, thoroughly cut off from the surrounding world that lives and moves. It sometimes takes two hundred years for a province to accept and to yield to the sentiments of another province, where they have already been forgotten. Among the Tibetans this is constant, but it is also more explicable. Korea, for example, always lags behind China, whereas Japan, which leaps over transitional stages, can imitate at will either a form which disappeared from China ten centuries ago or one that is scarcely born to-day. Tibet is impregnated by India, Turkestan by Persia, Indo-China by Cambodia and Laos. In China itself we find the same thing, according to the dynasty, the school, the region, or the religion. A thing apart, as it is everywhere, and almost immovable in time and space, Buddhist art remains distinct from everything that is not itself. It weakens, evidently, in proportion



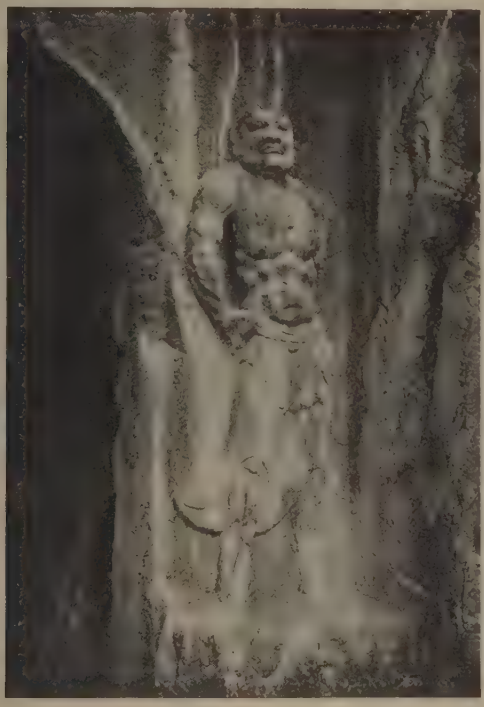
Buddhist Art (Wei) (second half of v Century). Kwan-Yn in soft stone. (*Charles Vignier Collection.*)

as faith descends, but it still remains distinct and distant, a language symbolic of the infinite and the universal, a spiritual light concentrated in a seated human form and flowing inexhaustibly from all the surfaces of that figure.

If we consider Chinese painting in its entirety and without allowing for its local attempts at emancipation, the artificial survivals from periods when it succumbed, and the general confusion of its development, we may say that some fifteen centuries passed before Chinese egoism consented to tear itself from the contemplative life. Only then could it go down to the torrent where the kingfisher watches for his prey, or furtively approach the bough on which the nightingale, chilled by the dawn, ruffles his plumage as he rolls his last sob, or observe the blackbirds hopping on the snow. It was scarcely before the Ming dynasty, in the fourteenth or in the fifteenth century, that the Chinese painters looked closely at the birds, the fishes, and the flowers, as if to bequeath to Japan, which was asking their instruction, the incomparable science with which two or three thousand years of practical and immediately interested observation had equipped them. With disconcerting facility they disdained, at this moment, the conventional language that had made their art so glorious; they abandoned the disciplined liberty that enabled them to express abstractions of sentiment merely by respecting and exalting the laws of harmony.

Let us turn away from the birds, the fishes, the flowers, the things to be described in their physical aspects; let us for the moment disregard the direct, pure, and clear portraits whose candid penetrating glance astonishes us; let us also forget the embroidered screens and the decorative paintings with their tremulous movement that recalls the flutter of wings. We then perceive what the great painting of China is:

it invades our spirit like a wave of music. It awakens intimate and vague sensations, impossible to seize, but of a limitless profundity; they pass one into



BUDDHIST ART (Wei) (VI to VII Century). Grottos of Long-Men. Guardian of the Gates.
(*Ed. Chavannes Mission.*)

another, gradually welling up until we are completely overcome by them. We cannot discern their origin or their end. The forms in Chinese painting have the

appearance of still being partly in the clasp of the primeval clay. Or one might say that they appear through a layer of water so limpid, so calm, that it does not disturb the tones which have been fixed and immobilized under it for a thousand years. Whether

Buddhist Art (Wei) (vi to vii Century). Grottos of Long-Men, bas-relief. (*Ed. Charannes Mission.*)

they tell us of a pollen of flowers, of the undefined shades on the throats of birds, or of the subtle colors that rise from the depths of ripening fruits, the silk paintings of China have nothing in common with the object. They are states of the soul in the presence of the world, and the object is only a sign—deeply loved, certainly—which, according to the way it acts and combines with other objects, suggests that state of soul. The transformation is complete and constant. And through it, when the Chinese paints or rather evokes things like the depths of the ocean, which he has never seen, he does it with a poetry so profound that it creates reality. Thus. on a canvas the size of a nap-

kin, a heron preens his plumage in the morning mist—and the immensity of space is suggested. Space is the perpetual accomplice of the Chinese artist. It condenses around his paintings with such slow subtlety that they seem to emanate from it. The masters lay on their blacks and their reds with gentleness and power, as if they were drawing them forth little by little from the patina of dark amber which they seem to have foreseen and calculated. Children play, women pass, sages and gods converse, but that is never what one sees. One hears peaceful melodies that light on the heart in waves of serenity.

T'ang Art (vii Century). Tomb of Tchao-Ling. Mandarin. (*Ed. Charannes Mission.*)

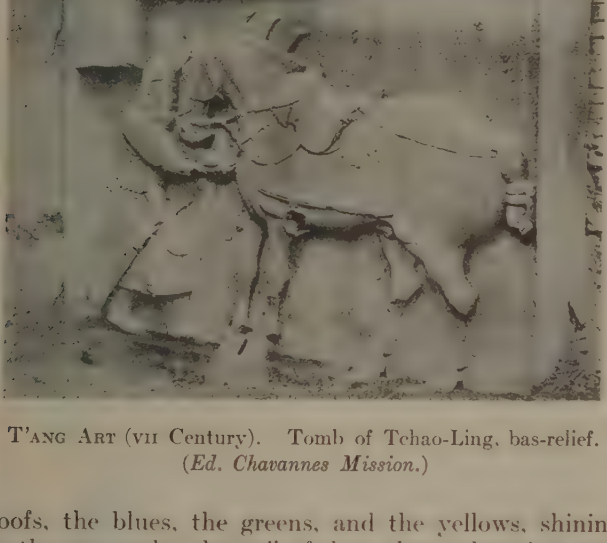
But serenity, unfortunately, is exhausted as quickly as is enthusiasm, for it also is a result of effort. When the Chinese artists departed from the original sources of their inspiration, they resorted to wine in order to attain the mental state prescribed by the sages, and in the artificial enthusiasm of the stimulant, in which they indulged more and more, they discovered their fire, their joy, their irony, their serenity even, in proportion to the amount they drank and to the turn of their minds.

In gaining mastery over themselves they destroyed their own life. From century to century, with the strange slowness that characterizes the activity of the Chinese, their painting, which had been taken into the service of the imperial court as soon as it left the monasteries, followed the evolution of their other means of expression. It turned to traditionalism, and did so with an obstinacy especially dangerous, since, if painting is to live, it must remain the most individual of all languages. Here it developed in an almost unbreathable atmosphere of formulas, of rules and canons which were written down in twenty thousand works, codes, histories, lists of practitioners, titles of pictures, and technical treatises that transformed the art of painting into a kind of exact science and engendered thousands of imitators and plagiarists of an ability beyond belief. And so Chinese painting returned to its origins as a graphic art; it created enormous quantities of models to which the artist could resort for forms drawn in all their details and all their aspects, leaving him only the work of grouping them. The capital vice of Chinese calligraphy, which arrests the development of the mind by blocking the exchange of ideas and which carries abstraction into puerile sophistry, reappeared in the last expression of the art which it had endowed with its first technical tool. It is the form of revenge which the objective world takes when it is forgotten too quickly. That intoxication of the spirit known to men who have rid themselves of all shackles is denied to him who has lost the right to seek other forms for his equilibrium than those in which his ancestor found peace.

III

Here we have at once the anchor that holds firm the soul of China and its pitfall. The architecture of

luxury, the pagodas and the palaces, reveal this in the clearest light. Everything in them is preconceived and artificial, arranged for the demonstration of a certain number of immemorial rules of metaphysics and common sense. The faïence and the enamel of the



T'ang Art (vii Century). Tomb of Tchao-Ling, bas-relief. (*Ed. Chavannes Mission.*)

roofs, the blues, the greens, and the yellows, shining in the sun under the veil of dust always hanging over them, exist above all for the joy of the eyes, although each one of them symbolizes a meteorological phenomenon, or the forests, the plowed land, the waters, or some other strip of the earth's robe. And if everything is blue in the temples of heaven, everything red in the temples of the sun, everything yellow in the temples of the earth, everything blue-white in the temples of the moon, it is that there may be established, between the harmonies of the senses and the

Buddhist Art (early T'ang, vii Century). Bodhisatva.
(*J. Doucet Collection.*)

harmonies of nature, an intimate and continuous coherence, in which the serenity of the heart fixes itself, becomes immobile, and demonstrates to itself its certitude and necessity. But beneath the great need for unity and calmness, fetishism and magic patiently assert their rights. The placing of the edifice, the invariably uneven number of roofs superimposed on one another and turned up at the corners—a memory of Mongol tents—the little bells jingling at the slightest breeze, the monsters of terra cotta on the openwork cornices, the moral maxims painted everywhere, the scrolls of gilded wood, the whole mass of thorn bushes, arrises, crests, bristling and clawlike forms—everything shows how constantly the Chinese were concerned with attracting the genii of wind and water to the edifice and to the neighboring houses, or of keeping them away. We observe a similar idea in the great artificial parks, where all the accidents of the earth's surface, mountains, rocks, brooks, cascades, forests, and thickets

T'ang Art (viii Century). Tomb of Chouen-Ling. Ram. (*Ed. Chavannes Mission.*)

are imitated to the point of mania. It is as if the Chinese who, outside of the cities, never change the original aspect of their native soil, were expressing the respect it inspires in them by bringing it down to the scale of human luxury. The Chinese people is more submissive than religious, more respectful than enthusiastic. It is not that it lacks gods or that it does not believe them to be real. Those men who called themselves the disciples of the profound Lâo-Tsze, the Taoists, introduced among the Chinese as many divinities, perhaps, as are born and die every day on the soil of India. Moreover, all those beliefs that are interpreted only by the practices of popular superstition grind one against another and interpenetrate, so that in the same individual we almost always find them existing side by side. In reality, whether he is a Buddhist, a Taoist, a Moslem, or a Christian, the Chinese believes what he has been advised to believe, without experiencing the great mystic need to increase, to modify, or to impose his faith on others. His gods are abstractions of a practical and positive kind: longevity, riches, sensuality, literature, charity—or they are demons, protecting or hostile genii, the spirits of the earth, of the sky, the sea, the stars, the mountains, the cities, the villages, the winds, the clouds, and the running waters; or again they are deified scholars and writers. But they have no other importance. If the Chinese conducts himself properly, observing filial respect, obeying his ancestors and the Emperor and the mandarins who represent the Emperor, if he takes care to place his house in such a way that the spirits shall not be disturbed and that their watery, aërial, or subterranean dwellings are preserved—all of which reveals Chinese mastery of hygiene, meteorology, and agriculture—he does not doubt then that these spirits will look upon him with benevolence. No disquieting thoughts plow the

T'ang Art (viii Century). Tomb of Kiao-Ling. Ostrich, bas-relief. (*Ed. Chavannes Mission.*)

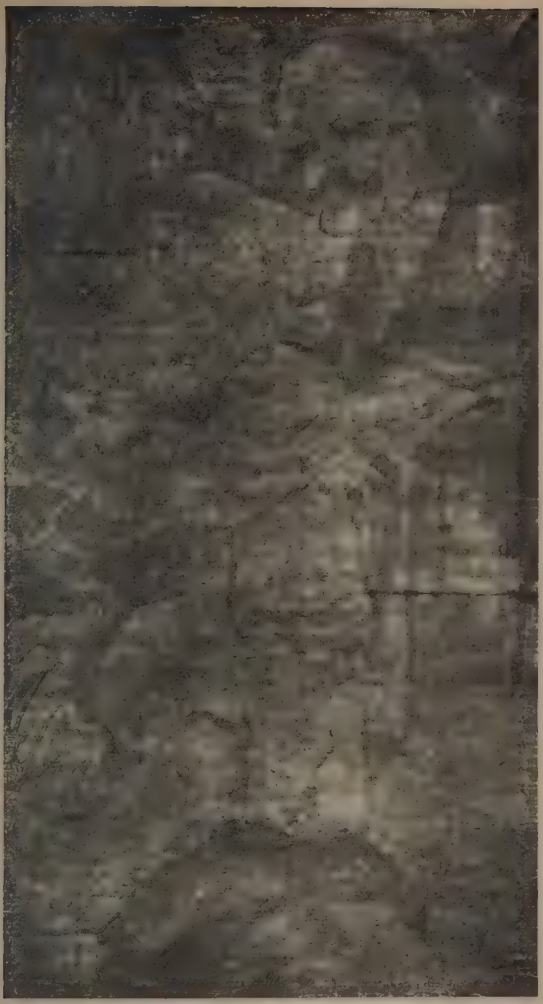
depths of his soul. When one roots out desire one kills remorse, but one also makes an end of the life of the dream.

What increases, in this age-old habit of discipline and moral obedience, is patience. The Chinese does not permit himself to imprint on matter the symbol of his abstractions until he has scrutinized forms for so long a time that all of them are defined in his memory by their essential character. When the flash of intuition illuminates our minds and we need to reach the law, we do not hesitate to thrust aside the accidentals that mask it. The Chinese, on the contrary, collects these accidentals, catalogues them, and uses them in order to demonstrate the law. His audacities cannot shock those who know his science. Since his abstraction is fixed, he may express the fact more clearly if he bends, warps, and twists form in every direction; and so he makes the wrinkles in his faces so deep that they must cut into the bone; he arms the mouth with a hundred teeth, and the shoulders with ten arms; the head is surmounted with a monstrous skull; the features grimace; the eyes stick out of the sockets or are sunk deep in them; he accentuates laughing or weeping with the most improbable lines; the breasts fall in folds on the fat of bellies; hips, arms, and legs are all awry, and fingers are knotted like tendrils of grape vine. Because of his philosophy he can cause monsters to crawl on his cornices, unfurl them in the yellow silk of his standards, and raise them up at the threshold of his palaces; he has created a whole army of heraldic dragons, of phœnixes, unicorns, and writhing chimeras, which are perhaps nothing more than a vague memory, transmitted by the old legends, of the last primitive monsters straying among the first men. In all of this we see the spirit that forces the literary men to obey a ritual until all their gestures are studied,

T'ang Art (618–906). Three figurines, terra cotta.
(*Charles Vignier Collection.*)

that causes the historians to deform history in order to make it fit the outline of their systems, that causes the gardeners to gnarl the trees and manufacture flowers, the fathers to crush the feet of their daughters, and executioners to cut men to pieces. Traditional morality will destroy life rather than adopt its free movement.

But also, when life is in accord with morality, when emotion and will meet in harmony, when the spirits of goodness, kindness, and justice dwell in the mind of the artist naturally, what goodness, kindness, and justice there are in the faces and the gestures of the gods! The great Buddhas of gilt wood sit on their beds of lotus, their hands open, their faces illumined by peace, their whole forms filling the shadow of the sanctuary with the glow of the absolute which penetrates them. To combat them and make men forget their serenity, the Taoist priest gathers from life every engaging expression that he can find—the divine smile and the dance of women, the quizzical kindness of the sages, the childlike joy of the saved, the indescribable and blithe atmosphere in which floats the trinity of happiness. A strange sweetness emanates from all those little works of wood and ivory, of jade and bronze, that people the pagodas and encumber the flat baskets with the colored-paper signs along the crowded streets where the refuse of humanity accumulates. In the heart of this philosophic people the philosopher has indeed extinguished all of that disquietude which racks men, but so often causes them to rise higher. What matter? Situated as they are, they have the strength of those who know little, but who are certain of what they know. Their peace is a little stupid, no doubt; their absence of cares, their absence of dreams, has something that perhaps irritates one in course of time and is even unhealthful. But one reads in it such a



KOUAN-HIOU (?) Lohan, painting (first half of the x Century). (*Charles Vignier Collection.*)

certitude of honesty that one feels oneself attached to these men. They have given their singular expression to the moral life by studying the incessant struggle that takes place in the depths of human nature and by realizing that it has its origin in the aspiration toward higher levels. The strange thing is that we should see beauty in that struggle itself and that the Chinese should find it in the victory his ancestors won for him in ages past. He expresses his obstinate, unlyrical enthusiasm for those who gave him repose of conscience for all time. And it is the weight of that repose that we feel in his art.

Therein lies the mystery of this soul which is complex on its surface, but infinitely simple in its depths. It achieves a science of form so sure that it can carry the grimace of its logic to a point that we should call impossible; but it can also attain to essential and profound beauty when it is lit up by a flash of emotion or when it is confronted with the necessity of constructing a durable and immediately useful work. We must not allow ourselves to think that their artificial parks are lacking in freshness and silence. We must not fail to see that the whole Orient is in the torrent of strange flowers they cultivate there. They gather into their triumphal symphonies the color of its coral reefs strung with pearls, its sumptuously figured silks that display the red or blue of the heraldic dragons on the imperial yellow which is strewn with flowers of dark and gleaming enamel. It is, indeed, the whole Orient that they give us: the rising and setting of its hosts of powdery stars in the clearness of rain-swept skies. Neither must we allow ourselves to believe that Chinese architecture lacks science and solidity. The fact that the most ancient examples of it do not date much farther back than the tenth century is due to the fragility of the materials. To protect the buildings

from heat and rain, the Chinese know what slope and what projection to give to the roofs, which they support by combinations of demountable framework, as powerful and as light as the creations of nature. There is one thing that they know especially well, and therein they are like the Romans, nay, more, they are like all the ancient peoples of the massive continent in which great summits alternate with great deserts, and great forests with great rivers: they know how to give to their work the appearance of style. Whether an airy or a heavy style, it affords invariably a firm and sublime base on which to rest our certitude of having achieved our aim completely. We find this appearance in the utilitarian edifices of the Chinese, in their bridges, triumphal gateways, and gigantic arches, their battlemented ramparts and the immense walls that inclose the plains and climb the mountains. Like the old sculptors of the valley of the Nile, they have animated the desert with avenues of colossuses, whose modeling is so vast and so summary that they seem to be installed in the solitudes for all eternity; the undulation of the sands, as they spread out to the buttresses of the mountains, seems gathered up into their structure, and the sphericity of the sky as it spans the circle of the plains.

IV

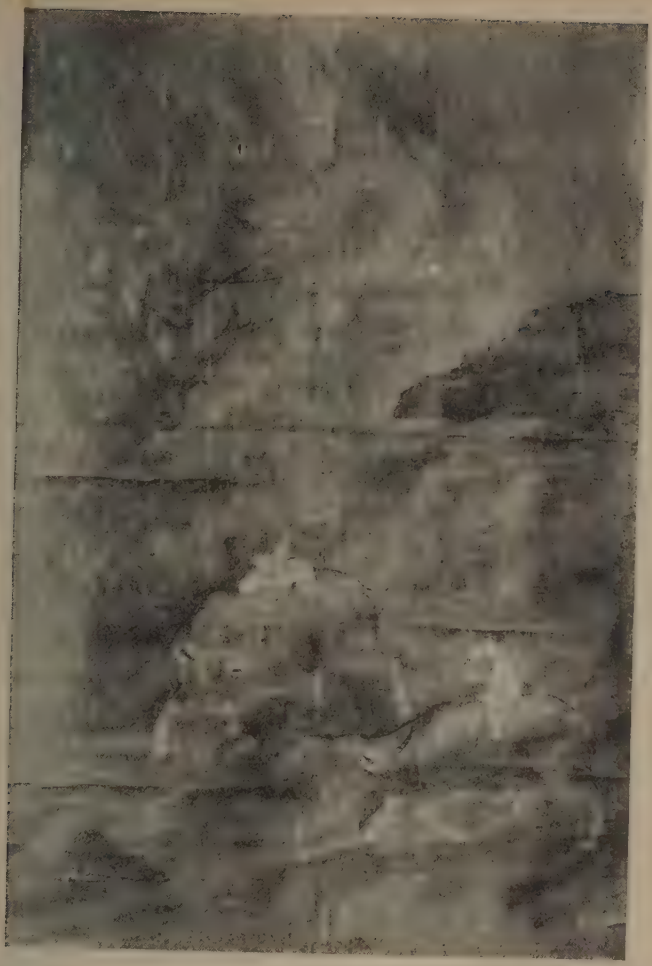
If, at about the time that Marcus Aurelius was sending embassies to China, there had not been the strange essay at sculpturing the walls of the temple of Hiao-tang-chan with flat silhouettes that look like shadows on a wall, or if we had not begun our acquaintance with certain archaic figures that date back at least to the beginning of our era, we might still believe, as we did for a long time, that not a stone had been sculptured in this land until the conquerors of the

northern provinces had, in the fifth century, introduced the moral contagion of the religion of Buddha. Here, as in the Indies, we find mountains hollowed out and rocks submerged by the great wave that rose from hearts filled with hope to overflowing. When the flood had receded, it left behind it colossal figures with pure faces and lowered eyelids, seated giants whose two hands lie open across each other; palm branches and fans are waved over the processions that pass with mighty rhythm across the walls of the temple, ten thousand gods, smiling, silent, and gentle live in the darkness.[1]

The cliffs, from top to bottom, were sculptured, the walls of every rift in the rock became alive, the glow of the spirit descended from the pillars and the vaults as they were hewed out along the lines indicated by the accidents of their projections and their hollows. A hundred sculptors worked in the shadows to complete the summary modeling of some gigantic statue; and such was the unity and power of the creative energy which animated them, that the divine monster seemed to issue from two hands and from one intelligence; it seemed the cry of love that a single breast prolonged

[1] The monolithic temples of Ta-t'ong-fou, of Long-Men and of Kong, were discovered by M. Edouard Chavannes in the course of his admirable and fruitful explorations in 1907. I thank him most warmly for having authorized me to reproduce the innumerable photographs that he brought back with him, and of which I have been able to reproduce only a few because of lack of space. (Note to the first edition.)

Also, thanks to Charles Vignier, I have been able to recast completely the illustrating of this chapter of the present edition. It is to him that I owe the information concerning origins and chronology which has permitted me, as far as possible, to get a fresh estimate of Chinese archæology, a subject that is barely advancing beyond its embryonic stage. I hope that this rare spirit will pardon me if I do not venture to use the ordinary formulas in expressing my thanks to him. The distant and slightly ironic character of the Chinese sages has exercised so charming an influence on the education of his sensibility that he must not hesitate to recognize a reflection of that influence in the very affectionate sentiment entertained toward him by his unworthy pupil in Sinology.



Li Kouei-tcheng (about 910). Children playing on buffaloes, painting. (*Charles Vignier Collection.*)

across the ages. And it is here perhaps that Buddhist sculpture attained the supreme expression of a science of light for which there is no equivalent elsewhere, even among the greatest sculptors. The light does not seem to mingle, as in Egypt, for example, with the planes of the statue in order to render subtle its passages and profiles. One would say that it floats round the statue. The form seems to swim, to undulate in the light, like a wave that passes without beginning and without end. But we have here a specifically Buddhist quality, shared by this school of the northern conquerors with the statue makers of India and Korea, of Japan, of Cambodia, of Tibet, and of Java. It is held in common by all the representatives of this strange international school of Buddhist sculpture, in which the Greek influence is always manifest, through the nervous purity of the Occidentalized profiles, the harmony of the proportions, and the manner in which intelligence sums up and idealizes objectivity. China proper did not share fully in the faith which the invader from the plateaus of central Asia brought within her borders. Doubtless, it was but for an hour that she consented to abandon herself to the supreme illusion of the promised paradises. The most meditative, but, perhaps because of that, the least idealistic people in history had consented only against its will to go with the current that swept all eastern Asia and gave it that impersonal, secret art, of a spirituality so pure that ten centuries passed before China had freed herself from it.

To tell the truth, it was in this land that the wave of Buddhism lasted the shortest time. China reverted quickly to her habits of positivist meditation. Buddhism, with its brief climax of love, was still to give a greater depth and weight to her thought, as happens on the morrow of a passion tender and too clear-sighted.

She turned again toward death, and as the men who had hollowed out the mountains under her eyes had taught her to bring out of chaos the architectured form on which the light and shade paint the spirit of life, she was able to give to the funeral chant which she sang for a thousand years, from the seventh to the sixteenth century, a plenitude and a gravity of accent that had been forgotten since the days of Egypt. There is a heavy, categorical strain to it as of a settled thing — like the final conclusion of an intelligence that has turned round itself in a complete circle without discovering a single fissure through which doubt could enter.

Sung Art (960–1260). Water lilies. (*Charles Vignier Collection.*)

Certainly, we do not find in the funerary statues of China that secret illumination which mounts from the depths of the Egyptian colossuses to unite, on the plane of their undulating surfaces, the mind of man with the light. The Chinese people, as the masters of their soil and their culture, never suffered enough to

seek inner liberty and the consolation for living in a constant hope of death. They looked on death with placidity, with no more of fear than of desire. But the fact that they did not lose sight of death gave to Chinese positivism a formidable importance. Meditating on death causes one to see essential things. The anecdote, in which one loses oneself when one is concerned with the adventures of life, leaves the mind forever. The things that interest and hold the majority of men cease to fetter the mind, which realizes that it passes like the daylight between two flutters of an eyelid, and that in the light of this flash it must seize the absolute. And because it perceives nothing beyond life its hymn to death gathers up and confides to the future everything that is immortal in life.

Funerary sculpture increased in grandeur as the power of China increased, and decreased when Chinese power began to wane. From the time of the T'ang tombs to that of the Ming tombs, from the dynasty that represents China at its apogee to that which marks the end of the period, the red and yellow desert that runs in slow waves to the distant mountain chains where copper and iron repose—the desert of China saw the rise of massive forms: men, elephants, camels, rams, horses, and ostriches; some are standing, some lying down—all are motionless and on guard over the sleep of the emperors.[1] The whole plain was a work of art, like a wall of decoration, and the sculptors used the curves, the projections, and the perspective of the plain to give value and accent to the giants of stone. They were seen advancing from the horizon, marching like an army, climbing the hills, descending the valleys, and when they had once arisen for their march

[1] These tombs of the first great dynasties, from the seventh to the eleventh century, were discovered also by M. Edouard Chavannes in the course of his exploration.

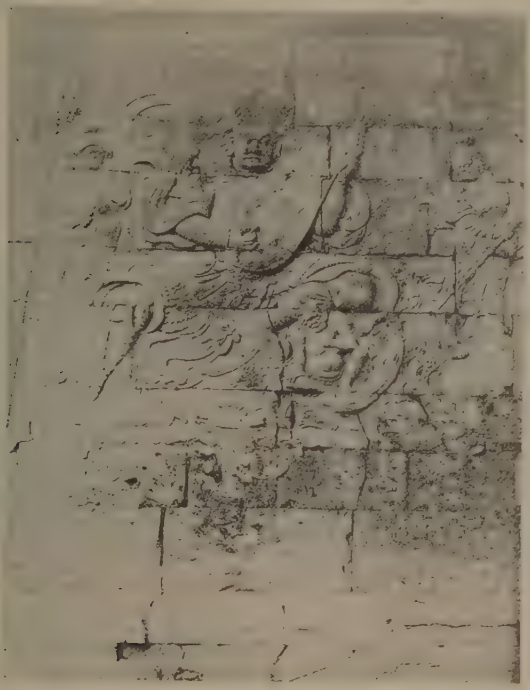
LEANG ART (x Century). Children playing, painting. (*Langweill Collection.*)

or parade, they heeded neither the grasses nor the briers that began to grow again as soon as the hewers of images had disappeared. They followed one another

Iron Pagoda of K'ai-fong-fou (XIV Century).
(*Ed. Chavannes Mission.*)

and gazed upon one another; and the crouching lions witnessed also the passing of men laden with tribute —now hidden, now revealed by the undulations of the soil. Separated, absolute and definitive, the lone and silent multitude of forms rose up in the dust, under the

sky, as if to bear, to the ends of the earth and to the time when the sun itself should be burned out, the formidable testimony that man had passed this way.



Vault of Kiu-yong-kouan (XIV Century). Bas-relief.
(*Ed. Chavannes Mission.*)

Starting with the tombs of the T'ang dynasty, from the powerful, bas-reliefs that remind one of an Assyria visited by Greece, the Chinese sculptors, already possessing the most direct vision, condense their science gradually to arrive at a more summary expression.

Under the Sungs they were able to conceive an object as a mass so full, so shorn of details and accidents, so heavy and condensed, that it seemed to bear the weight of thirty centuries of metaphysical meditation. Thenceforward they could permit themselves all the stylizations, all the deformations, all the audacities needed for the affirming of the moral truths revealed to China

Wall of Glazed Brick of Ta-t'ong-fou.
(*Ed. Chavannes Mission.*)

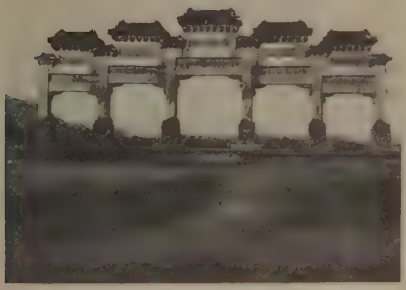
by the sages of the ancient days. Under the Mings, at the moment when the artists were about to lay down their tools, when China, then only marking time, was about to let Japan slip from her embrace, to rush into the life of freedom and self-conquest, the Chinese had acquired an imposing virtuosity. They cast enormous iron statues to guard their temples. They decorate walls and vaults with strange figures that form melodic lines undulating in curves which, while irregular, are

as continuous and rhythmic as the ripples on the surface of the water. Along the colossal avenues, the grimacing monsters and the chimeras alternate with the massive elephants, the dromedaries, and the warriors as straight and as pure in line as towers.

Thus we reach the same conclusions whether we study this race in the forms farthest removed from the realism of the early ages, or whether we consider the sculptured stones that best recall the living masses one sees outlined against a dusty plain at the approach of evening—the real domestic animals, the herds, and the caravans: we may seek in one type of art as well as in the other for the center of the Chinese soul. It is a soul devoid of imagination, but so firm and so concentrated that it is not impossible that its motionless realism will one day drive back the upward-looking idealism of the Occident and impose itself on the Western races when they have become eager for repose. Chinese art is an immensity. The art workman plays a role in China that is as important in the life of his people, and as permanent, as in Egypt. For thirty centuries he peoples the dwellings of the living and the dwellings of the dead with furniture, carpets, vases, jewels, and figurines. Three-quarters of his production perhaps is still buried. The valleys of his two rivers constitute a mine of art that is doubtless as inexhaustible as that of the valley of the Nile. Also, the forms that it yields vary to as great a degree—from the grave or terrible to the charming, from the pots of bronze that the Chinese buried for centuries so that the juices and minerals of the earth should slowly give them their patina to the swarms of "Tanagras" that issue from the necropolises. These latter are less picturesque, certainly, than their Greek sisters, but they are also purer and more summary; they are conceived with more fleeting contours, more decisive

NANKING. Stone elephants.

planes, and rounder masses, and they offer a more touching homage to feminine grace, chastity, and majesty. What matter if this infinite art seems paradoxical at first sight? As in the case of that Egypt which at first appeared so monstrous, we are beginning to perceive here the simplicity, the unity, the grand coherence of the strangest conceptions. Under the



Tomb of the Mings (xv Century).
Triumphal Gateway.

grimaces of the statues, under the complicated robes that cover them, under the outlandish cornices of the architecture, the bristling masses of the varnished monsters, and the flaming of red and gold in the sanctuaries, there is present a real and indestructible principle of construction. Sculptural modeling, which is sinuous and balanced among the Greeks, a thing of movement with the Indians, and rectangular with the Egyptians, is spherical with the Chinese. Under the ornaments and the symbolic attributes, under the most disordered coilings and twistings of the monsters, the passage and the plane of the sculptor penetrate each

other in a slow and continual progress, as if to produce a closed block. In its essential examples, one would say that this sculpture causes form to rise slowly to abstraction, that the abstraction descends slowly toward form, and that lightning flashes from the two as they fuse, eternal, compact, and pure. At such moments China, like Egypt, Greece, India, and the France of the Middle Ages, attains one of the summits of the mind.

V

The spherical unity of the modeling, which expresses the immemorial soul of China, is the image of its substance. By its configuration, by its soil, by the race that peoples it, the Middle Kingdom is a unit. China and the Chinese form one agglomerate thing in which the moral and the social solidarity, the passivity and the impersonality of the crowds, cause their inmost being to become a mere extension of the country itself. It is a yellow mass without contours, composed of the dust and clay of the land: the age-old dust that is brought by the north winds and that whirls in never-ending clouds across the disk of the sun, and the clay carried along by the rivers to cover the earth with their deposits; the dust and the clay are mixed into plaster for the walls of the houses, and the houses, again, and the men with their yellow skin which continues the soil, merge into the entity which we call China. The yellow earth goes to the very heart of the cities, and the perpetual exchange of misery, of dirt, of provisions brought in by the caravans and the river traffic, gives to the whole mass, and to the life that runs through to its depths, a slow, compact movement that never leaves the circle which it first followed. The horizon is as closely limited as the life, and all the

space and all the duration of the world cohere and are one.

An agriculturalist, or rather, a gardener—for ten thousand years, perhaps—cultivating his square of earth with slow patience and solicitude, accumulating

Tomb of the Mings (xv Century). Triumphal Way. Monster.

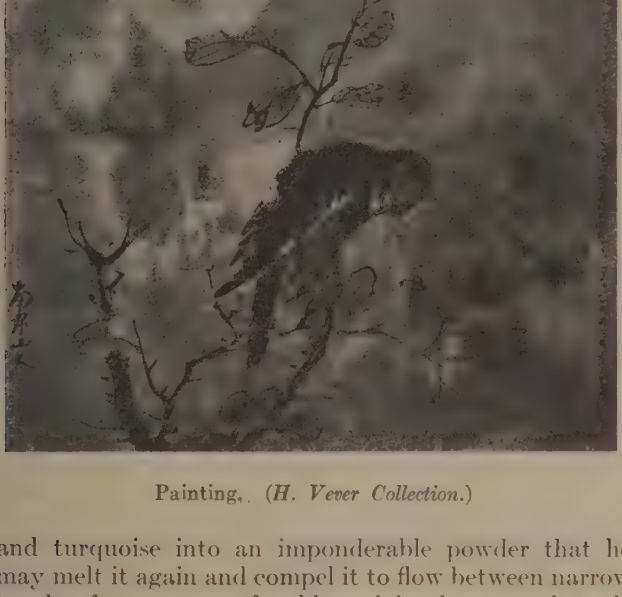
human fertilizer for it, getting his food and the food for his family and his beasts out of the smallest space, always bending over his soft soil and often living beneath its surface, his whole skin, his feet, and his hands impregnated with that soil the Chinese knows its weight, its consistency, its degree of moisture and dryness, its very taste. He hears the dull murmur that stirs it when seed is sprouting. One would say that his whole sensual imagination has concentrated in the desire to handle that unctuous earth and the substances that he takes from it, the fat jade, cornelian stone, crystal, agate, chalcedony, the hard stones whose spots he knows how to utilize, whose veins he

knows how to follow, the kaolin and the flint, the white earth, the copper and the tin that he melts together to produce his black bronze. He knows his material so well, he is acquainted to such a degree with its habits and customs and peculiarities, that he can melt or

Tomb of the Mings (xv Century). Triumphal Way. Elephant.

boil it by holding back or by forcing the fire, so as to render it more or less hard, more or less brittle, to vein it, to mix it with other materials: he causes powdered metal that has been liquified by heat to flow through it, or breaks its surface with a crackle. His brass is deeply mottled with the green gold that he runs through it, with yellow, red, or violet gold, and with irised blues that have an appearance of danger, like sleeping waters. As he works his brass, weighty, dense, sonorous, and hard, the metal flattens and swells and takes on the aspect of solid blocks; the incrustations on its rough outside, with all the interlacings of slimy skins, of spines and tentacles, still leave its heavy profile intact and pure. His bloated dragons aroused by the rum-

bling and writhing of the sea monsters, his snails and his toads swollen with pustules, are brought from within the metal by *repoussé*, and with so sure a stroke of the hammer that the creatures seem to adhere by their own viscosity. The Chinese artist grinds coral



Painting. (*H. Vever Collection.*)

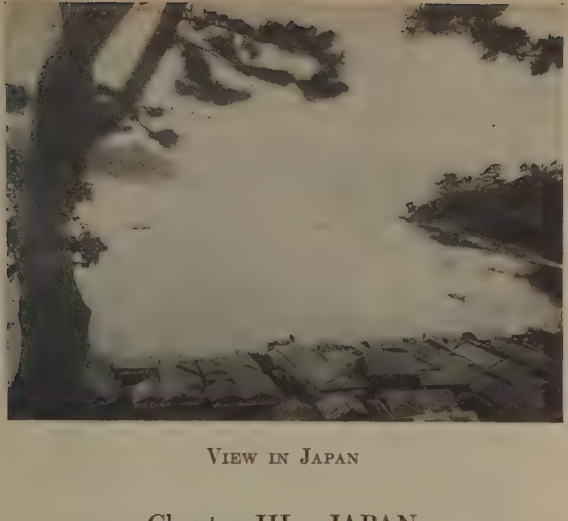
and turquoise into an imponderable powder that he may melt it again and compel it to flow between narrow bands of copper or of gold, and in the enamel made somber by flame his deep blues, his mat greens, and his dull, opaque reds form flowers of blood, thick leaves, and the shining, golden plumage of the birds. On porcelain, finally, he defines his gifts as a painter, for they had never been quite able to become a part of their own time and free themselves from the calligraphic processes to which they adhered in the monasteries.

When he reaches porcelain painting, the Chinese can incorporate the color with the paste and with the glazes of vitrified silicates, and in strokes as fine as cobweb or as broad as petals he projects upon the object to be decorated his childlike gardens, his lakes, brooks, and cascades, his kiosks and bridges, his butterflies and dragon flies, his beloved and well-fertilized countryside that blooms under the spell of his science of the sky, the winds, and the crops; there are rain-washed azures, there are flocks of birds swept along by squalls, there are clouds, flowered branches, reeds, and aquatic corollas. Here is the flower, here the insect; all the living tissues are here— the wing, the stamen, the antenna, the pulverulent pollen; all the moods of the air are here its unfathomable transparence, its sudden opacity, its infinitude of shades from dawn to night, from the shower of rain to the dust, and from the pale moonlight to the red of the sun. Against the moving background of the blues, the greens, the reds, the pinks, the yellows, the violets, the whites, and the blacks, he sets the varied stage on which are performed the painstaking, concrete, and monotonous labors of those who cultivate the soil. If he desires to present clear daylight and smiling gardens, his painting is as if drenched with dew, it is as fres has a water color, and it is sharply outlined against the beautiful glazed and translucent backgrounds. If the cloudy sky blackens the surface of the waters, then the branches, the leaves, the dragons, and the landscapes arise from infinitely opaque depths and are seen vaguely, like mosses and plants through the water of a spring. And if a sumptuous evening is the subject which the ceramist has in mind, he lets the flame of his furnace creep over the sides of his vase again, and the variegated enamel gleams amid its wall of gold.

Brass and terra cotta take on the sheen of great, ripe fruits armed with thorns and ready to leave the branch. How heavy, how subtle, and how pure is Chinese form! One might say that it is less a material form, despite its heaviness, than a crystallized sound. The strange, positivist people! without an ideal, it still hears, in the depths of its obscure soul, this clear music. In the cylindrical form, the ovoid form, or the spherical form there is always the circular rhythm of China. Will China always turn in a circle, with the same patient, indefatigable, and slow effort which permits her to keep up the movement that is her salvation and to live without advancing? Or will she break this circle and adopt as her ideal the constant renewal of herself at the crest of the mounting waves of things? Will she not attempt, in this incessant pursuit, to gain the illusion of freedom? It is probable. She is stirring. Her five

Ming Art (xvi Century). Divinity offering lichens and chrysanthemums. (*Charles Vignier Collection.*)

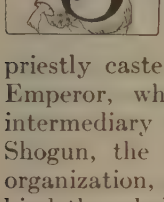
hundred million men are going to be swept into the movement of the Occident; they will break our painful, age-old equilibrium, overturn the economic rhythm of the globe, and perhaps, in their turn, impose on us an immobility that they themselves will require a thousand or two thousand years to regain. We know nothing. The complexity of the present and future world is a thing beyond our grasp. Life rumbles, life rises. It will yield up its forms to the men yet to be born, that they may be consoled for having been born.



View in Japan

Chapter III. JAPAN

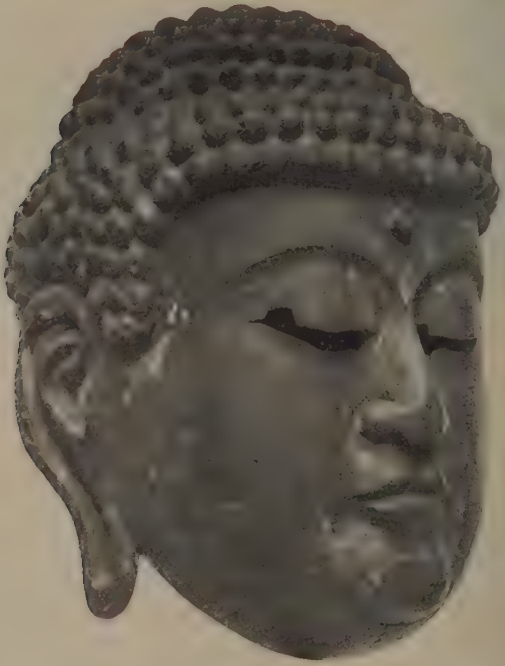
I



APAN, fifty years ago, had not emerged from a social state which recalls that of the Middle Ages. The Daimyos divided up the empire into a few great hereditary fiefs. Between them and the peasants was a warrior caste, the Samurai, and a priestly caste, the Buddhist monks. Above was the Emperor, whom no one perceived, the mysterious intermediary between Heaven and men—and the Shogun, the real chief of the political and military organization, having powers of life and death. To bind the whole fabric together was the steady aim of the Japanese. Here, then, is our mediæval society in its entirety—less sincere and better policed.[1]

[1] It is this mediæval character, retained by social and political Japan until the end of the nineteenth century, which decided me to place this

When the revolution of 1868 caused the feudal system to fall like a piece of stage setting which had



Buddhist Art. Lacquered wood. (*Louvre.*)

concealed from Western eyes the true nature of Japan, the Occident was astonished at the speed with which

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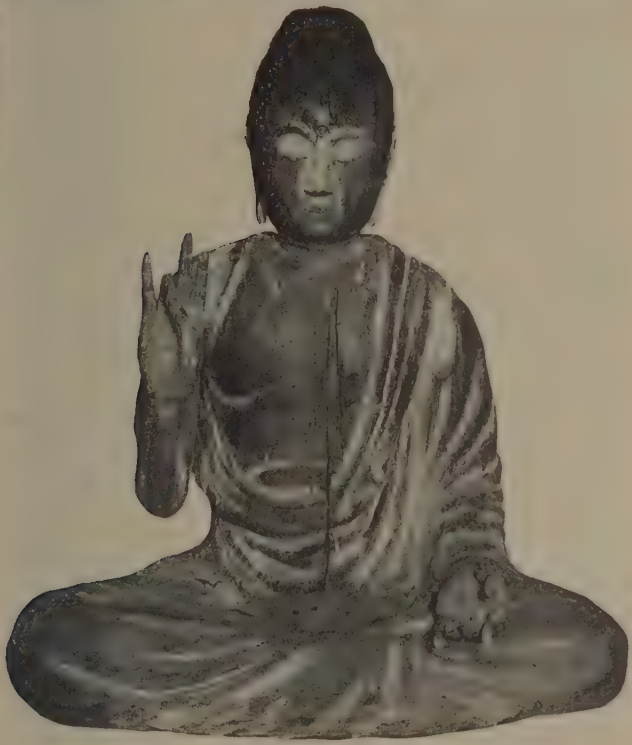
entire chapter, as also all the others treating of the non-European arts, in the volume devoted to the Middle Ages, which should be looked upon as a state of mind rather than as a historical period. It is to be observed, however, that Japanese individualism tends, from the fifteenth century onward as in the Occident, to detach itself from the religious and philosophic synthesis which characterizes the mediæval spirit.

Japan assimilated the external form of the European civilizations. At a bound it covered the road that we had taken four hundred years to travel. The Occident



Buddhist Art. Buddha. Wooden statue. (*Louvre.*)

could not understand. It thought the effort disproportionate to the means and destined to failure. It took for servile imitation the borrowing of a method whose practical value Japan could appreciate before

she utilized it, because old habits of artistic and metaphysical abstraction had prepared the mind of the people for Western ideas. Under her new armament of machines, of ships, and of cannons, Japan retained the essentials of what had constituted and what still constitutes her strength — her faith in herself, her controlled passion, her spirit of analysis and reconstruction.

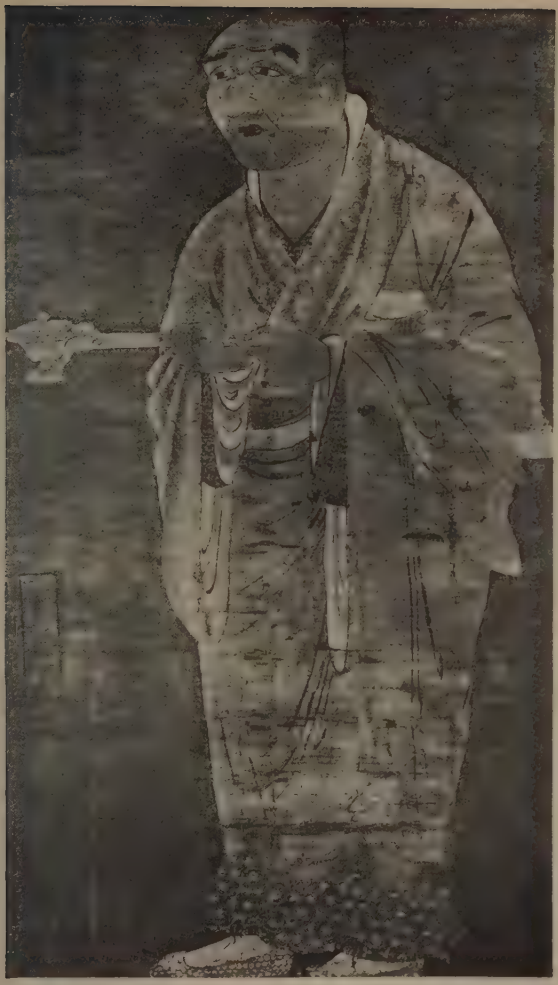
The reproach addressed to Europeanized Japan is not new. She had been accused of acquiring from China —and through China from India—her religion, her philosophy, her art, and her political institutions, whereas she had transformed everything, recast everything in the mold of a savagely original mind. If one were to go back to the sources of history, one would not find a single people, outside of primitive tribes, to which another people had not transmitted the essentials of its acquirements. It is the wonder and the consolation of our human nature. By this solidarity, which rises victorious above all the wars, all the disasters, and all the silences, everyone who bears the name of man understands the language of man. Chaldea fructified Assyria; Assyria transmitted Chaldea to Persia and, through Persia, stretched forth its hand to India and to Islam. Egypt educated Greece, Greece animated Italy and, across the Middle Ages, guided the modern Occident. The Middle Ages of Europe rejoined the Arabs, through Byzantium and the Orient. China, which had felt the contact—by way of India—of Egypt, of Assyria, and especially of Greece—China carried over all these mingling forces to Japan that the latter might make such disposition of them as the teachings of her soil and her passion should dictate.

When, at about the time of Europe's conversion to Christianity, Korea transmitted Buddhism to Japan and with it the philosophy and the art of the Chinese

Kobo Daishi (ix Century). Wooden statue. (*L'Art du Japon, publ. by Brunoff.*)

and the Indians, the island empire occupied the same position that Dorian Greece did in relation to Egypt and western Asia. Silent, as early Greece had been, Japan did not know, any more than Greece, that she would have found the traces of her ancient life if she had sought the formless statuettes in her tombs. Although Shintoism deified the forces of nature, it had proscribed images. This was doubtless a matter of dogma that was foreign to the soil of Japan and that came, like Buddhism, from one of those ethnic elements —Mongol, Malay, or Ainu—which contributed to the formation of the race. It is certain that Japan accepted it only half-heartedly. As soon as Buddhism had opened its sanctuaries to all the Shinto gods, and fixed their look in bronze and wood, the Japanese recognized the image of their real desires in them.

But so long as the original materials of the race cohered, its artists did not free themselves from the need of Korea, from the immemorial will of the Hindus and the Chinese. The seated gods with the lowered eyes and the open hands are like a block, round and pure and modeled by the light. The spirit that inhabits them flows from everywhere and envelops them in solitude and silence. One feels them as bound up with space, and from all points they seem to gather its vibrations into their fluid surfaces. Are they Japanese, Hindu, or Chinese? They are Buddhist. It is but very slightly that religious sculpture begins, in the eighth century, to reveal the silent germination of the true national sentiment. The development is seen in the work of Kobo Daishi, the old statue maker. In his statues of warrior gods, so radiant with energy, there is something of *arrested* gentleness and of *arrested* violence which is already purely Japanese. He will not surrender his self-control. Whatever his fervor, his anger, and the impulse of his heart, the Japanese,



Priest of the Tendai sect (about the x Century).
(*From The Kokka.*)

when he has attained his true nature, will dominate the expression of these feelings.

Even when men think they are the masters of those decisions which seem freest, it is their general and unreasoned needs which dictate those decisions. When Japan closed her ports, at the hour when the Fujiwara came into power, it was because she wanted to grasp

Toba Sojo (XII Century). Painting, detail.
(*L'Art du Japon, publ. by Brunoff.*)

in herself the meaning of her own effort, amid the merging currents of the military migrations and maritime exchange. This people does not barter either its power of withdrawing into itself or its power of expansion. As soon as it perceives that it is too much cut off from the world or that it has been too active, it bends all its strength to dissipate rapidly the need for repose that had succeeded action, or of the need for action which it gathered from repose. It starts out on new roads with such a frenzy that it must suddenly stop to retrace its steps and, turning its back on the horizon, take an inventory of its conquests. In the ninth and the seventeenth centuries, it forbade the foreigner to enter its harbors, once in order to assimilate Buddhism

and again to study in itself the deep echoes of the Mongol invasions and the first incursions of the Occidental navigators. And it arrives at the decisive stages of its creative genius at a moment about equally distant from the time when it closed itself in and the time when it reopened.

II

The archaism that followed the first closing and the classicism that followed the second both developed in the same atmosphere of quietude and work. The political life concentrated in a single capital, Nara for the Fujiwara, Yedo for the Tokugawa. The people, which had been warlike until that time, confided the care of its defense to the military classes, so as to exploit the wealth of the torrents and the coasts and to clear the soil in security. And the sudden peace produced its usual harvests.

Half-effaced symphonies remain to us from these first ages of intellectual concentration, in which Buddhism, shared but very little by the people, shut itself up in the monasteries in order that their silence should enable it to illumine the old silk kakemonos. And through these works Japan saw within herself the rise of her veritable realities. At the moment which is summed up by the work of Kose Kanaoka, for example, we find a hieratic art full of the spiritual radiance of Buddhist painting; and this is paralleled by the appearance, in the somber harmony, of its reds and blacks, of the gold of the backgrounds and the aureoles, to give a warmer patina. But the new problems—those of the idea and those of technic—offer no more than temporary obstacles to the nascent spirit of the Japanese in its manifesting of a vision that was already more direct, more incisive, and clear-cut than that of the artists of the continent. Those three obscure and very

Statue of the Jingo Kuago (x Century). (*From The Kokka.*)

slow centuries, when the artists are held in the archaic mold, do not yet, to be sure, permit the Japanese spirit to free itself, since the monastic life in which the intelligence is at work is closed to the life of movement, to what brings enjoyment, to what brings suffering, to what brings understanding. But sometimes, when the

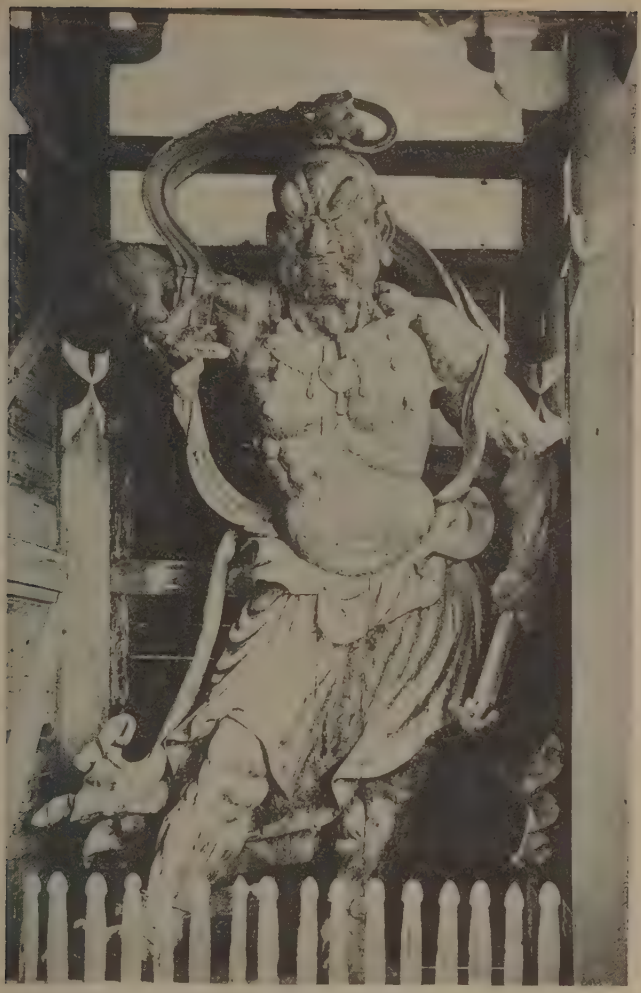
Daibutsu of Kamakura. Bronze statue (XIII Century).

monk quits the cloister, when he comes into contact with the pine forests, the torrents, and the dark seas, prodigious flashes of light bring before his eyes—with a clearness that perhaps is not to be found elsewhere in history—the extreme scope of his genius when freed from limitations. Toba-Sojo, the painter, and Unkei, the sculptor, are already true Japanese. The one has quite left the temples; he roams the woods, collects the insects, and spies on the mice and the frogs; he accords to all the beasts a clear-eyed and joyous friend-

ship, and thereby sees them repeating in their own way the gestures of men—which he finds very diverting. The other, to whom the last sculptures of the Buddhist grottoes of China offered a pretext for releasing the unknown forces that slept in his race, suddenly carries his disciplined violence into the brutal effigies of his warrior divinities.[1] The vision of Kobo Daishi is quite realized with these furious, simple statues—almost pure, but with an inward impulse toward murder and combat.

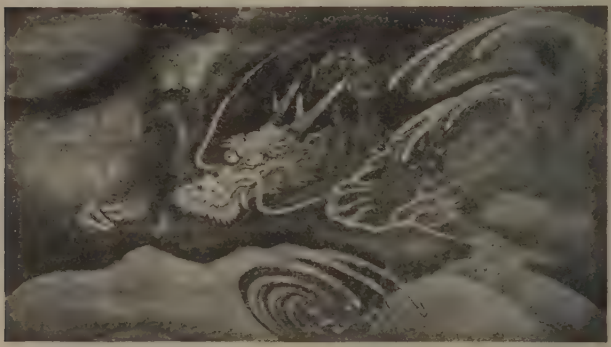
Between these two contemporaneous works—that of the painter and that of the sculptor, who are so different in aspect—there is, therefore, only an apparent conflict. They meet at the point where the individuality of the Japanese frees itself from the statue maker's art to affirm itself in painting. The abstract art of the metaphysical systems which are present at the origin of every great civilization was drawing to its close. Unkei is the last of the great sculptors. Sculpture, the religious and hieratic art, which always corresponds with a well-defined society, could not survive the feudal anarchy that preceded the Mongol invasion. In proportion as the remembrance of the teachings from abroad was obliterated, the great traditions declined in the monasteries. Civil wars rent the country. Religion lost its original freshness to become an instrument of political domination. While, to the eyes of the people, the Mikado still represented the old Shintoism of their ancestors, the Shogunate, supported by the pretorians, was opposing Buddhism to the traditional cult. Sculpture obeyed the laws of dissociation

[1] M. Edouard Chavannes has already indicated the analogy that exists between the statues of Unkei and the guardians of the gates of the grottoes of Long-Men. See figures on pages 67 and 113. The evidence is clear. How did the Japanese sculptors come to know these colossuses? Doubtless it was because China exported bronzes and wood carvings that were directly inspired from them.



UNKEI (XII Century). Guardian of the temple.
(*L'Art du Japon, publ. by Brunoff.*)

dictated by the state of society. It overloaded itself with incrustations, complicated itself with draperies, and, when it lost the calm of its lines, it lost the whole of its spirituality. It is only in the seventeenth century, when the painted wooden effigies of monks were erected, that among the severe profiles united by



Sesson (died 1495). Dragon. (*From The Kokka.*)

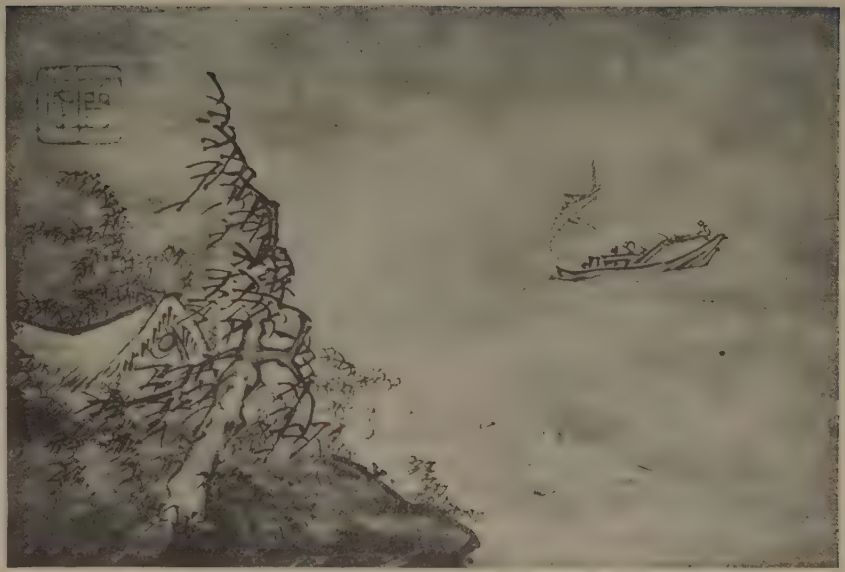
fleeting passages which envelop them with strength and security, the sculptors found again a little of the radiance of the seated Buddhas whose peaceful countenances had for eight hundred years bent over the faithful, and whose fingers, raised in their pure gesture, had taught them wisdom.

Painting, on the contrary, would not have existed without the invasion. The Japanese soul, which had lost its basis of religion and to which Toba-Sojo had prematurely given a basis of popular life, was getting away from its course and becoming anæmic in the service of the nobles. With the Tosa school, founded in the thirteenth century by Tsunetaka, who claimed to represent the art of the ancient archaic master, Moto-

TAKAUBU FUJIWARA (Tosa school). Portrait (end of the XIV Century). (*From The Kokka.*)

mitsu, its tenacity very quickly degenerated into minuteness, its science into skill, and its fineness into preciosity. When it reached its end in the academic miniatures, in which the court people satisfied their puerile taste for antiquated things, the national spirit had long since been delivered of its atrophying influence. Japan was weary from turning about in the same closed circle, and, having been assailed by the Barbarians ever since her art had emerged from the monastery, being touched by the immeasurable life of the new ideas that invasion brought with it, she let herself go with the wind.

Toward the end of the fifteenth century, when old Kano Masanobu, impressed by the work of the Chinese Josetsu, founded the great school of Kano, he appealed to continental traditions in order to combat the narrow academism of Tosa. In so doing he was following the tendencies that his master, Shiubun, and Sesshiu and Soami and Sesson and Shiugetsu, had already manifested. It was the good fortune of Japan that the Chinese painters of the period were seeking to regenerate their vision by the patient and direct study of animals and flowers. They could inform Japan as to her true nature, tear her away from the religious symbolism for which she was not made, and make it possible for her to follow her individualization along the roads that Toba-Sojo had explored with so much audacity. But the strong discipline of China did not immediately permit the Japanese artists, happily for the development of their mind, to go as far as their astounding precursor. First, they learned the architecture of landscape, they gazed on their country with a religious emotion, they got the appearance of the rocks, the angular trees, the jagged mountains. A rolling murmur followed the reawakening to life, a rude hymn after the silence. Powerful poets of the



SESSON (died 1495). The Tempest. (*From The Kokka.*)

brush, like Sesshiu, Sesson, and Soami, covered their white paper with those summary black dabs of India ink which give us for the first time the effect of things seen in a mirror dimmed by having lain in water. We see cranes in a sky, ducks in a pond, or the strong lines of a landscape, misty, chaotic, and wooded. Sesson discovered in it fantastic apparitions, dramas of the air and of the lakes—wandering barks, birds at dawn half frozen on the branches, and trees lost in the fog; by his powerful abbreviations he announced Korin. Sesshiu seemed to live with the beasts and to share with indifference their implacable destiny. The violent life of the earth entered him like the breath of his nostrils; he was far from men and seemed to remember the gods no longer. In his somber splashes of ink he gathered up the central forces that issued from the soil of the shaggy, pine-grown hillsides, the sap that poured through branches, the blood that swelled in throats and bellies, the hunger that hardened beaks, the brutal flight that ruffled plumage, the terrible sim-

Sesson (died 1495). Bird.
(*From The Kokka.*)

Sesshiu (1438–1506). Landscape. (*From The Kokka.*)

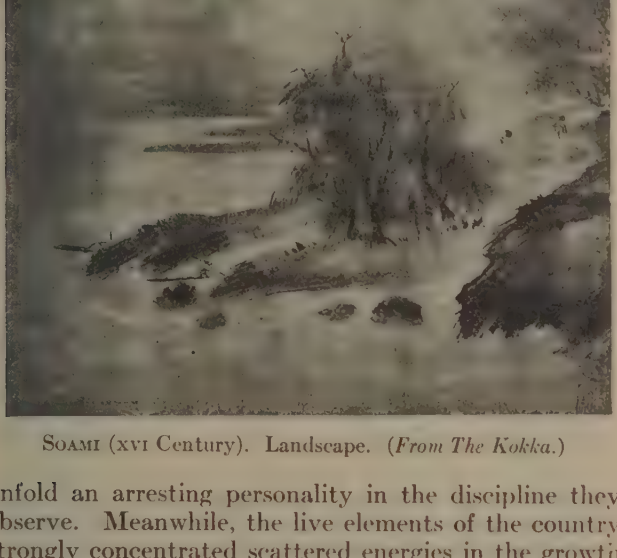
plicity of natural forms in the presence of instinct, of space, and the wind.

Kano Motonobu, the son of the founder of the Chinese school, could now borrow from the continental painters practically all their subjects, their motifs, and their composition. At bottom there existed such an antagonism between the spirit of the islands and the spirit of the continent—the one resolutely objective and quite devoid of sentimental partiality, the other so often employing the aspects of the world for demonstrating and moralizing—that what Monotobu naturally transmitted to his pupils before all else was the profoundly constructive action of Shiubun and Sesshiu. He brought to his task the power for synthesis that only a predestined genius possesses, and, in him, archaic culture could not fail to establish, on an indestructible base, the powerful sentiment for nature that the Japanese people had been seeking for five or six centuries in the depths of its soil, in the seed that expanded it, in the torrents whose every pool it had explored—whose every stone it had lifted, in the trees of its forests which it cut down and trimmed for the building of its houses. Kano Monotobu saw how the birds polished their feathers in the morning dew and how the cranes stretched out slender legs as they sank earthward in their slow flight. Except for some sleepy creature of the air, its neck under its wing, its plumage ruffled by the cold of the dawn, nothing would be seen but the boats lost in fog and in space. . . .

III

This austere vision was very soon to be transformed. After China, there had arrived the world of the Moslems, of India and Persia, of the Portuguese and the Dutch. Japan had either to free her mind of the robust

education of the Chinese or else submit to them definitively and surrender her privilege of self-expression. The Kano masters, on the outskirts of the evolution of ideas, were turning the continental tradition into academic formula, little by little, also some of them—Eitoku, for example, a powerful poet of tree forms—

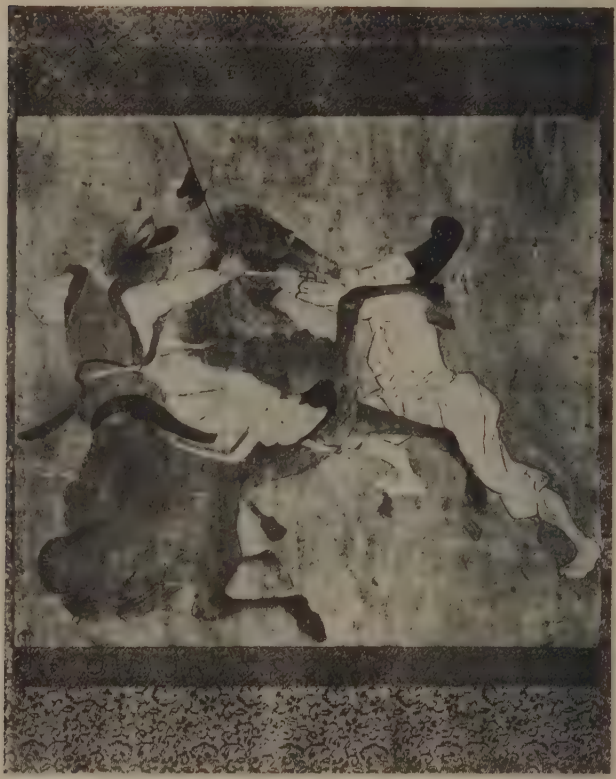


Soami (xvi Century). Landscape. (*From The Kokka.*)

unfold an arresting personality in the discipline they observe. Meanwhile, the live elements of the country strongly concentrated scattered energies in the growth of audacity and faith which followed the protectionist edict of Iemitsu, which again closed Japan to the outer world. In a movement analogous with the one that was taking place at the same moment in western Europe[1]—

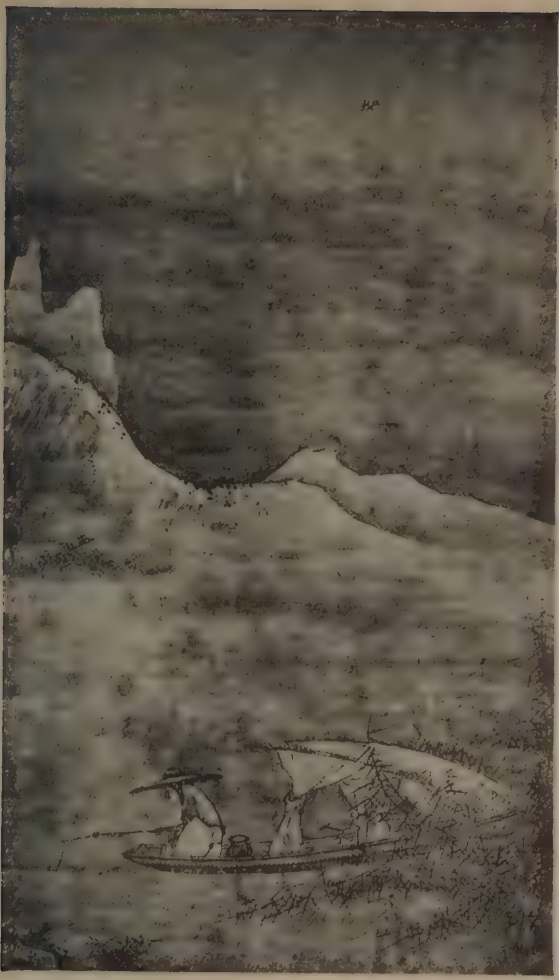
[1] It is, moreover, remarkable that the intellectual evolution of Japan should correspond almost exactly, in its general directions, with that of the Occident. Its Renaissance is of the fifteenth century, its classicism is of the seventeenth, its art of pleasure and fashion is of the eighteenth, its landscapists of the nineteenth.

which was realizing its classic expression in France, in Holland, in Spain, and in Flanders at the same



MITSUYOSHI (Tosa school) (XVI Century). Painting. (*Louvre.*)

time—Japan found the moment of equilibrium when the spirit, freed from encumbering ritual, became master of the new rhythm; it could then offer to the



KANO MASANOBU (1453–90). Fishing.
(*From The Kokka, vol. iv.*)

sleepy crowd a safe refuge for ideas ready to scatter over the rich future. A new architecture is to recreate the statue maker's art, and for two hundred years Japan will pour into it the resources of its flora and fauna; before the end of the period, the artists, by their ingenuity, will be compelled to develop from this architecture even the humblest arts of industrial ornament, which will be dispersed among the people, as the dust raised by the fall of the temple descends upon the plain. When, upon the order of the Shogun Iemitsu, Hidari Zingoro built the temples of Nikko, it was in the name of the whole race that this artist, who was an architect, a chiseler, a smith, a beater of copper and bronze, a master of niello, a wood carver, lacquerer, decorator, cabinet maker, and gardener, took possession of the inner realities that Japan was suddenly discovering in herself. These monuments, dedicated to the spirit of the national hero, Ieyasu, fixed in an epitomized and definitive image the desire of an entire people, which thereby freed itself so as to expand in every direction.

On this convulsive soil, where volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and tidal waves have so often destroyed in a few seconds the great cities that lie between the mountains and the sea, the fall of stone walls would crush men every time that subterranean fire bursts through the crust of the earth. A construction of wood, set up simply, offered no resistance to shocks. And the sanctuaries rose amid the forests of cryptomerias and maples whose eternal youth they called upon to witness their unshakable fragility and to sustain their vigor. The temple is mingled with the forest —which enters into the temple. It is conceived like a picture. Often it leads the traveler to its gates by rows of smiling gods, covered with moss and little flowers, and stretching away on both sides of the road

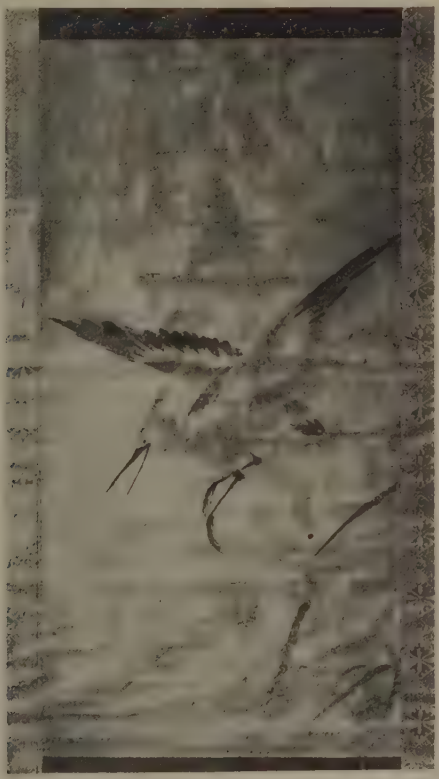
KANO MOTONOBU (1475–1559). Landscape.
(*From The Kokka.*)

to the horizon. Avenues of closely planted trees, black and straight, conduct one to the very stairways of the porticos. Among the horizontal branches hover the roofs of green bronze; the walls of red lacquer rise among the bare trunks; the somber verdure of the cedars continues through the winter to prolong the monumental harmony into the summer. If among the pines there are some clumps of chestnuts, of alders, or of oaks, the autumn will attune them with the creeping dragons of gold and the lines of gold that wind about discreetly with the ornaments of the cornices. The sound of the bells and the gongs mingles with the sound of the cascades and the sound of the moving leaves. The temple of bronze and of bamboo penetrates to the heart of the thickets, and if heavy trunks and broad branches are met on the way, they are surrounded by walls of lacquer so that they may dwell in the temple, in the center of the inner courts, whence their limbs will stretch forth to rejoin the forest.

And into all the halls, too, this somber forest enters, with all its flowers, all its trees, all its mosses, its springs, its birds, its reptiles, and the frailest and humblest of the insects over which each leaf is spread. Through red lacquer, through gold lacquer, through incrustations of metal, mother-of-pearl, or ivory, the forest spreads out its branches over the blood-red or black partitions that mirror the depths of the dawn or the depths of the night; it lets its petals and its pollen rain into the temple, it sends—flying, creeping, or leaping into the temple—its little beasts, innocent or mischievous, for whom every blade of grass serves as a refuge, which hollow out galleries in the subsoil and whose hum resounds in the sunlight of summer days. Nature is merely an inexhaustible reservoir, swarming with small living forms under the deep mass of the branches, and the artist of Nippon has only to

seek there at random to gather the things he uses to decorate the house of man or the house of the gods.

After this moment the Japanese artist no longer



KANO MOTONOBU (1475–1559). Painting. (*Louvre.*)

thinks of art as having any other function. Thus all the teeming life of the surrounding world is introduced, not only into the religious life of Nippon, but into its

everyday life. This is more important, for religion is only a wheel—though a necessary one—in the social mechanism. The life of the world is communicated to the Japanese by the kakemonos, the screens, and the bibelots which furnish his dwelling, the prints which pass from hand to hand, by the flowers embroidered on dresses, by the beasts incrusted on the scabbards and hilts of swords, on combs and on caskets. Only, it is not at random that he introduces this world into his wooden and paper houses. It would have broken down the partitions and torn the windows. He does not forget their calculated fragility or their rigid lightness when he lets in the outside world. He makes all the forms yielding and adaptable to the thickness, to the transparence, to the directions and the colors of the constructions and of the lacquer varnishes or the silks that cover them. He has *stylized* nature.

An erroneous distinction has often been made between the process of reason which consists in stylizing a form and the process of instinct which tends to idealize it. Idealization does not re-form an object; it reconstructs and completes it so as to deduce the most general, the purest, and most hopeful meaning that the object has for man. Stylization adapts it to its decorative function by systematizing the characteristics which appear in practically a consistent manner when the form is studied. The artist saw that all forms and gestures and all architectures in repose or in movement retained certain dominant qualities which defined them in our memory and which, when accentuated by schematic processes, could be applied to decoration with the utmost exactitude. By its power of stylizing the world, Japanese art stands as the most intellectual, if not the most philosophic, of our plastic languages.

School of Matahei (xvii Century). Painting. (*Louvre.*)

Stylization has never been an obstacle to the Japanese artist. On the contrary, it permits him to place his science at the service of a fantasy that knows no limits. It authorizes him to turn into geometrical

A monk. Sculpture in wood (XVII Century). (*Louvre.*)

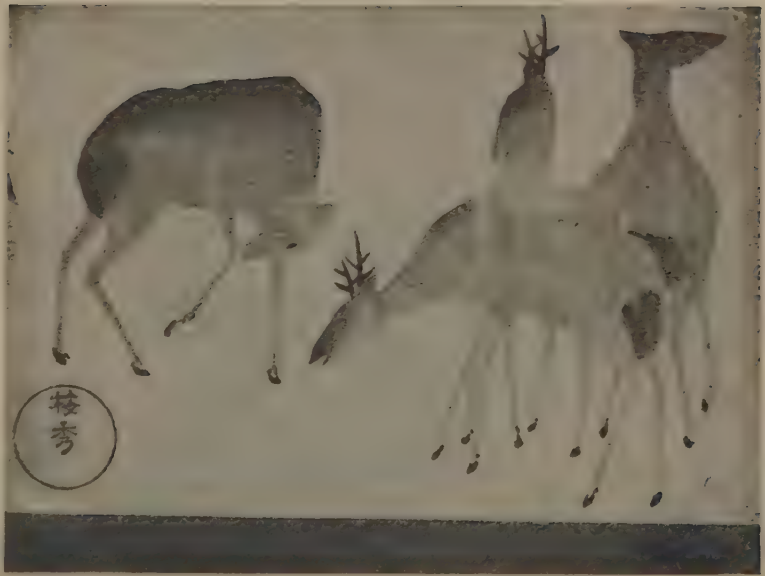
forms the whole of nature, transposed and recomposed—beasts of silver, pewter, or gold; plants of red or black lacquer; gilded flowers, blue flowers, green flowers; leaves—red or blue or black; nights and days and suns that no longer retain anything of their original colors. But the rigorous logic which brings about order among the sensations out of which the

forms came little by little clothes them in another kind of reality, distant, crystallized, and magnificent. Their life exists through their relationships, the object is of no importance save with respect to the one next to it, and the higher type of truth is never in a fact, but in the way of understanding it and of uniting it with the other facts.

The miracle of this well-formed and precise language is that it allows the painters of the islands to retain a personality as clear-cut, as imperious, and as living as that of any artists of the Occident; the miracle is, too, that this language is neither transmitted nor repeated from century to century without contact with nature. Whatever science and certainty there is in his culture, whatever the power of his tradition, the Japanese decorator considers the visible world and takes counsel from it with unwearying enthusiasm. He is forever bending over it, and if he composes from memory so as not to retain anything of the moving form but the strongest appeal it had made to his mind, he does so only after having accumulated, like a collector of insects and plants, the tiniest details of knowledge of that form that he can get from thousands of close studies, wherein the bird lives again, feather after feather, the fish with scale after scale, the leaf with nerve after nerve.

IV

Never was any people more naturally an artist people, never did such a race draw on a field of sensibility, of enthusiasm and hope as rich as this one. As in Greece, all the aspects of the universe are gathered into a small space—mountains, lakes, forests, and arms of the sea that reach the heart of the land. As in Greece, an immensity of light glorifies the sea and



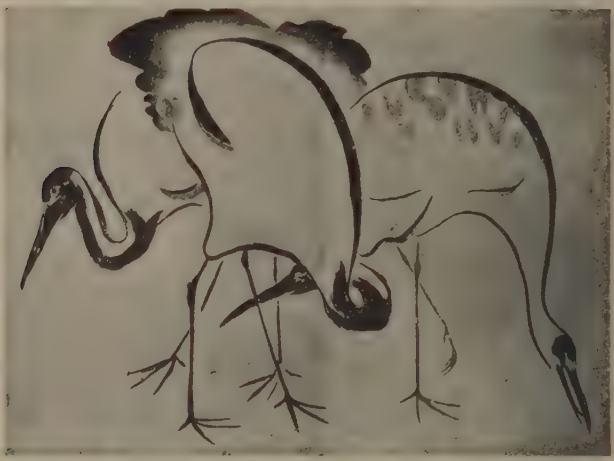
KORIN (1660–1716). Page of an album. *(H. Vever Collection.)*

the sky. More than in Greece, the spring deluged with flowers, the autumn with blood, the torrents carrying along the leaves or the petals which they sweep from their banks, all imprint the face of the soil with the sense of its inner life. All the climates to be found between Scotland and Italy follow one another, from the north to the south, in one continuous gamut upon which the identity of the geological formations imposes an impressive unity.

Not half a century ago, all the Japanese outside of the military caste were fishermen or peasants. Although their soil was hard to cultivate, it was fruitful, and they drew from it enough to feed themselves and, passing their whole life in this great, tangled garden where the tints of the horizon and of the flowers are so varied and powerful, living in the intimacy of the foliage, the snows, the cascades, the fruit trees, and the ever-resounding hum of the insects, they acquired a feeling for the forms and harmonies of the earth that penetrated them and was part of their nature, from the humblest of the serfs to the most powerful of the Daimos. Since the days of the Greeks, no other people in its ensemble was ever an artist to the degree attained by the people of Japan. Not possessing the power of illusion and the ennobling vision of the Greeks, to be sure, the Japanese still recall them in a great number of ways—in the seminudity with which they live their sturdy, healthy lives, in their optimism, in their tendency to deify the forces of nature and to deify human heroism, in the position of woman and of the philosopher-courtesans, in the masks of their theater, and in their sinuous and linear conception of form. It is the land where, in the springtime, husbandmen with their children and their women leave the fields and, taking with them provisions for a journey that may carry them twenty leagues from their village,

go to see the blossoming of the cherry trees at the edge of a torrent.

What is strange is how this people, always open to external sensations and thus always impressionable and vibrant, still remains master of itself. It resem-

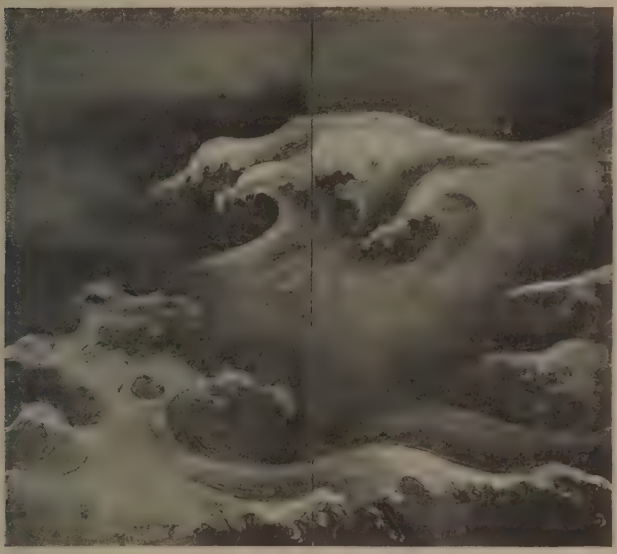


Korin (1660–1716). Page of an album. (*H. Vever Collection.*)

bles its soil, whose gayety masks the subterranean fire which is always ready to send forth its lava from a hundred volcanoes. It is an affable and smiling people, and if it bursts into furious violence, there is always a methodical guidance for these outbursts. Even its anger is reasoned, its fearful bravery is only a lucid exaltation of its will. Its very emotion is stylized. And its art—whose flight it accurately controls, whose lyric impetuosity it holds in clear-cut, though sometimes abrupt, form—does not abandon itself to the overflow of the marvelous instinct which directs it. Egoistic at bottom, and jealous of keeping its con-

quests for itself, this people seeks to give only a transfigured image of them.

This is the only point held in common by Japanese and Chinese art, the two being as different as the indented, violent, gracious islands are different from



KORIN (1660–1716). The Wave. (*From The Kokka.*)

the continent in its massiveness, oneness, and fixity. From the one to the other there is the distance that separated Greece, the investigator, the lover of forms in movement, from Egypt—almost completely immobile and in love with full, subtle, and closed forms. To the degree that China is a single block, slow in movement, secretive, and heavy, Japan—nervous, tense in movement like the twisted cedars of its forests—

is mobile and ready for innovation. The ancestor worship, which the Japanese retained with the first ideas of morality that came to them from their neighbor, was not, as in China, a homage to the immutable, but the cult of the will power and the moral power with which the dead had endowed them.[1] Its effect may be seen in the love of the Japanese for children, who stand, in their eyes, for an accumulation of energy greater than their own, because the children see a larger number of dead when they look behind them.

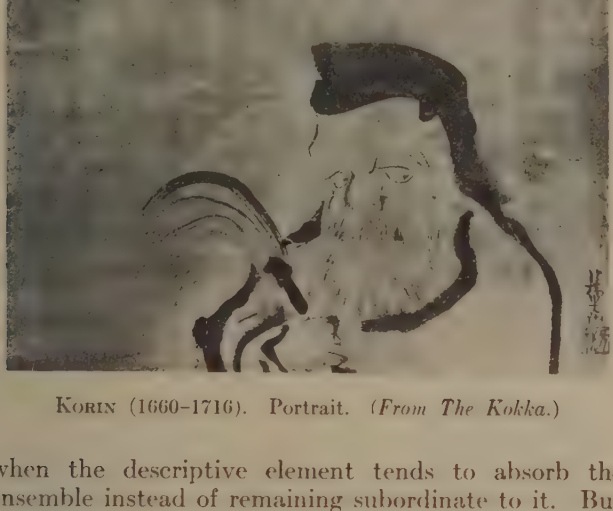
The world of the Japanese is a moving world.[2] The flowering of the gardens that they cultivate with a restless passion has in it something of this mobility, which we see also in the varying shades of their soil and in the profile of the mountains—which may change at any moment as the mists trail in tatters, now revealing, now masking the roofs of a phantom city, a lake, a dark stretch of sea spotted with white sails, a brilliant cone that starts up into the light, the forests of black pines, and the red forests of autumn. The soil may begin to tremble at any moment, and the twilight changes with the fire of the volcanoes. Japanese art will set itself to seize the characteristics of the object in movement, living, varying its place and giving, despite its practically constant form, the sensation of instability. It is as far from the mobility of impressionism, through which the modern Occident caught the variations of light with so much vivacity, as it is from the immobility of the Chinese. The Frenchman, working from nature and adhering faithfully to direct sensation, ended by losing sight of the characteristics of the object. The Japanese, composing from memory, sees nothing but those characteristics. With the former, analysis reaches the point of disso-

[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *Kokoro.*

[2] Lafcadio Hearn, *Loc. cit.*

ciation,[1] with the latter, synthesis reaches the point of creating a system.

The need of Japanese art to characterize things is so pronounced that our Occidental eyes cannot always differentiate between a work of character and a caricaturist's system. Caricature appears at the moment



KORIN (1660–1716). Portrait. (*From The Kokka.*)

when the descriptive element tends to absorb the ensemble instead of remaining subordinate to it. But how is that moment to be determined? Character and caricature oscillate around a purely theoretical point which all eyes do not locate in the same place. For a Japanese eye, doubtless, character continues after caricature has already begun for us.

What carries the Japanese artist beyond the mark, perhaps, is the ironical turn of his mind and, at the same time, his miraculous skill, which he does not

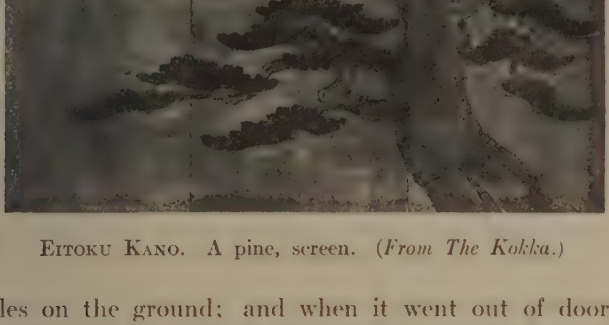
[1] With Neo-Impressionism.

sufficiently distrust. When, in a flash, he seizes form in movement, he gives an impression of infallibility, though one must hasten to add that this applies more especially to his representation of the smaller animals. Save in the case of Sosen, a savage and pure painter who lived in the woods like a wild creature, so as to surprise clusters of monkeys as they huddle together

Ceramics, enameled and fired earthenware, the piece on the right by Kenzan (XVII to XVIII Century). (*H. Vever Collection.*)

on great branches and shiver in the snow or the cold of dawn, the Japanese has not understood the larger animals so well as he has the smaller ones, for his eye is somewhat shortsighted and he does not easily grasp the idea of mass. He has scrutinized the microcosms so patiently and sagaciously that through them he has remade the world, as a scientist reconstructs it in the field of his lens. He has seen the sun behind a spider web. Beside him, the Occident, in its effort to bring everything to the level of man and to the general surroundings of his activity, seems to have neglected what is at the level of the soil, near our eyes, within reach of our hands — the things one can see only if one bends one's neck and stares fixedly at the same point,

only looking up to rest one's eyes after too prolonged effort. The Occident saw form and lines, certainly, and colors and their broad combinations, but it never saw a flower or a plant, it never studied the slight, curling lines on water or the trembling of a leaf. As it shut itself up in the house during showers, it did not see how the rain claws space nor how it bounces from the pud-



EITOKU KANO. A pine, screen. (*From The Kokka.*)

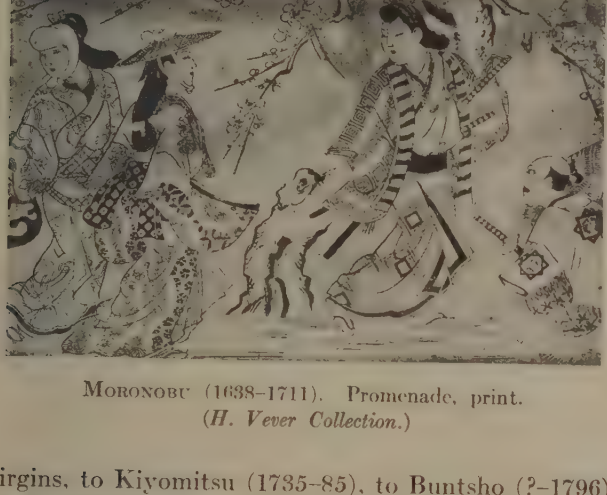
dles on the ground; and when it went out of doors again when the sun shone, it did not study the dust that dances in the light. But the Japanese has classified, as if in a science, the most secret revelations of his burning curiosity. His eye is a little shortsighted, he is very meticulous, he squats on his heels to tend his vegetables, to care for his flowers, to graft his bushes, and to make war on hostile insects. The life of his garden becomes the central theme of his meditation, which follows its ironical path through minute anecdotes and little concerts of rustling leaves. He has surprised the vast world in its humblest cares. He has visited the aquatic flowers with the sudden flight of the dragon fly, circled around with the bee from the hive to the glycine flowers, pricked the sugared fruit with the wasp, noted the bend of the blade of

grass beneath the weight of the butterfly. Under the wing shells, as the insect raises them, he has heard the transparent wings unfold, he has observed with passionate sympathy the tragedy enacted by the fly and the toad, and it was in watching the circular muscles roll in the flanks of snakes that he came to understand the silent drama of universal hunger. He has had long vigils over birds standing in melancholy on one long thin leg, and over their motionless intoxication with the freshness of the morning sun. He has seen them stretching out their necks in their rigid flights, and how they wink the round eyes that are flush with the sides of their flat heads, and how their spoon-shaped or pointed bills preen their varnished feathers. He has described the concentric circles that the water spiders make on the pools, he has discovered how the reeds stand waiting when the wind is about to rise, he has felt the agitation caused in gramineous plants and in ferns by the action of dew and by their proximity to a spring. And, having made all these tiny adventures a part of his life, he had only to raise his eyes to the line of the horizon to be filled at once with the serenity of the mountains in the light of the dawn, to feel peace come into his heart with the fall of night, and then to let his dream wander over the immobility of the distance or be cradled by the sea.

V

And here is a strange thing. Although, like the Greek sculptors, they saw around them nude human forms living and moving, the painters of Japan did not always evoke the human form more successfully than they did that of the larger animals, and it is especially when the human form is their subject that we hesitate to distinguish their need for character from their sense

of caricature. . . . Undoubtedly, they are moved on seeing the roundness of a woman's arm, or the curve of a breast whose purity seems molded in a cup of crystal. . . . The glory of the feminine body rises like a poem from the ardent Koriusai,[1] the painter of warriors and of



MORONOBU (1638–1711). Promenade, print.
(*H. Vever Collection.*)

virgins, to Kiyomitsu (1735–85), to Buntsho (?–1796), to Kiyonaga (1742–1815), the artists who so often remind us of the Greek vase painters—and to the great Hokusai himself (1760–1849), a man who could draw the fat expanse of the haunches or the globelike firmness of a bosom and at the same time could understand the upward thrust of the old volcanoes in the fire of the morning sun, or the rocking of the waves. Almost the whole art of the eighteenth century, here as in the Occident, was a voluptuous homage to the woman in love. Utamaro (1754–1805) is fervent in his

[1] Middle of the eighteenth century.

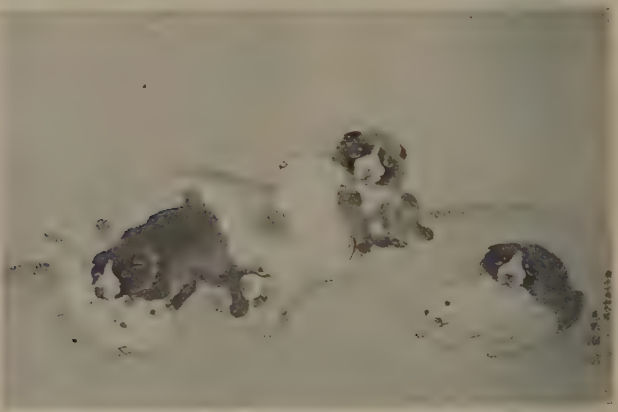
passion for the figures which he describes through the beautiful breasts that offer themselves like fruits, the high, hard necks under the hair that is combed upward, the oval faces under the jet-black masses of the hair that is secured by gold pins; Harunobu (1718–70), who is in love with the young girls he meets in the gardens and on the threshold of the paper houses,

Sword Guards. (*H. Vever Collection.*)

paints charming idyls in which he associates women and flowers and, through the discreet interplay of the effaced blacks, the burnt-out reds, and the pale greens, gives us glimpses of landscape in which lanterns light up the cherry blossoms that have come out under the snow. The art of these two Japanese would suffice to define the period. But the very strong, very sensual, and very gentle sentiment that even its greatest men had for the beauty of women did not often suffice to conceal the lapses in their expression. Occupied as they were in penetrating the structure of small things,

Masks. (*From The Kokka.*)

did they perhaps not have the time to analyze the human being? When they speak of him their language hesitates and floats, and formula appears. The feet and the hands, the arms and the legs, are singularly deformed and atrophied in ways that are not always very expressive; one finds them approximately the same among all the Japanese artists, as if one painter

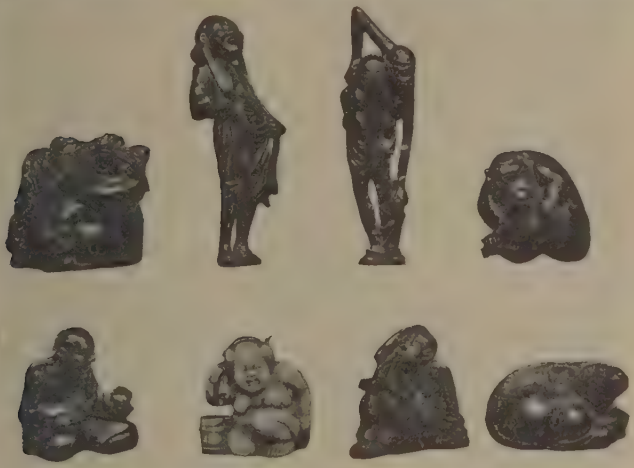


Okio (1732–95). Young dogs. (*From The Kokka.*)

had transmitted to the other the patient and meticulous recipe for them.

In the eighteenth century these lapses of expression are rather surprising. The painters who spoke of woman with so ingenuous a love possessed, at that time, a science of line that bordered on abstraction. With Morikuni (1670–1748) and especially with Masayoshi (1761–1824) drawing is no longer anything more than a system, a linear arabesque that silhouettes the movement with a stroke. The powerful modeling of the old masters of India ink is barely suggested by the

undulating line whose black accents on the white page give only a slight hint of the succession of the planes and the flight of the contours. The mind of Japan was to evolve fatally toward this prodigious graphology which, by its own realization, satisfies the sensual needs of the imagination in the same way that it is satisfied by the crushed, tapering, or sinuous



Netsukes, wood and ivory (XVII and XVIII Centuries).
(*H. Vever Collection.*)

volutes of the beautiful ideograms. But both expressions lead rapidly to forgetfulness of the external world, to pure abstraction, and to death.

In the full expansion of the Japanese soul, from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, the understanding of volume, which is to the language of form what philosophic balance is among the teachings of the senses, the understanding of volume by Motonobu or by Korin (1661-1716) enabled the painters to produce

their finest compositions. Even when linear arabesque alone filled the white page, even when the graded stroke did not indicate the density and materiality of things, even then their line was so fat and supple, with sinuosities and swellings that responded so well to the moving modeling of the external organisms, that it sculptured the form on the plane of the paper. To grasp Japanese art at the summit of its power we must look to the work of Korin. All the masters of Nippon, from Sesshiu and Sesson to Hokusai, live in that work, *in posse* or as a prolongation. And it comes just at the hour when Japan shuts its gates to descend into itself again and when, in a few years, the teaching of the primitives ripens in the meditative atmosphere of moral unity and of peace.

Masayoshi (1761–1824). Page of an album. (*H. Vever Collection.*)

The school of Tosa and the school of Kano united their conquests to form a definitive bone structure as a basis for Japanese sensibility. Mitsuoki (1616–91) exhausted everything precious and rare that the academism of Tosa could offer to the aristocratic soul of the nation. Tanyu (1601–74) employed his verve and his vigor to free Kano from its last servitude to the

Sosen (1747–1821). Monkeys, painting. (*H. Vever Collection.*)

Chinese. Itshio (1611–1724) struggled joyously against the Buddhist gods and was the first to go out among the peasants. Korin could drink at all the sources, break the fixed traditions to get back to the living tradition, and bind the new presentiments with the ancient realizations.

As a draftsman, he covered his albums with those powerful silhouettes, each one of which specifically incloses, in a swift line, the whole signification of the object synthesized, and, beyond the object, all the echoes that it awakens in the universe that we divine. As a lacquerer, he seems to do no less than reinvent an art which, for ten centuries, passed as the really national expression of the Japanese genius; he brought to fruition within himself the mind of the great lacquerer Koetsu (1557–1637), and created the great lacquerer Ritsuo.[1] His brother Kenzan (1663–1743), with Ninsei, the most powerful of Japanese ceramists, the man who could render the dampness of grasses and the freshness of flowers in the fire of his ovens, dipped into Korin's creations as at a natural spring. . . . As a decorator, he inspired generations of workmen who, a hundred years after his death, still came to ask him for motifs, for counsel, technic, and methods of stylization. When he let the India ink or the thick black varnish flow from the point of his brush, when he polished his lacquers of opaque gold with powdered charcoal, it was as if the whole ancient soul and the whole present-day soul of Japan were suspended within his soul to guide his hand. He had the power to seize, in the life that passes, the imperceptible instant that attaches it to eternal life. A few sparrows on the snow, a line of turtles, or a tuft of reeds sufficed him as a subject; a stroke, a shadow from his brush, and the

[1] Beginning of the eighteenth century.

absolute flows through his work. He seemed suddenly to abandon his color and his form when he had barely sketched them in, as if warned by a prophetic flash

HARUNOBU (1718–70). Young women at their toilet, print. (*H. Vever Collection.*)

that he should go no farther. A leaf of his album took on the grandeur of a fresco.

Before transposing the reptiles and the birds and the

fishes and the little mammals and the aquatic grasses into his profound gamut of greens, blacks, reds, and the golds of his lacquers, he had so zealously penetrated the meaning of their animation that it seemed as if that animation was what caused the glistening material to swell. The rolling trot of the mice, the flabby appearance of the toads, the silent flights in the sky, and the undulation of seaweed at the water's edge passed under the glazed skin of his pieces. His heart beat at having understood the enormous force of life that is hidden under the grass we tread on, in the depths of the dark springs in which our gaze is lost, and under the broad leaves which spread themselves out and cast a green shadow. Gold on gold, gold on red, gold on black, red on red, black on gold, the lacquer incrusted with metals seemed, with its creeping forms, its wings, the flowered branches that traversed it, and the pollen of gold powder that rained on it incessantly, an ingot of somber gold in which life trembled.

It was from Korin that there descended upon the later time that wave, formed of the minor industries, which becomes an ever-broadening torrent, and soon gives to any practical object that comes from Japanese hands the character of a work of art. Korin, like every great artist of Japan, remains a workman, and every workman in Japan can become a great artist, whether he is a painter or a lacquerer, a bronze worker or a smith, a ceramist, a wood carver, a carpenter, a gardener, or, like Hidari Zingoro, Korin, and Kenzan, more or less of all of them at once. A close and vast solidarity unites, one with another, all the branches of the most flourishing decorative industry that has ever existed, and it was from the greatest painters that the humblest of the carvers or the engravers got all their motifs. We find in them the spirit of the masters and the same passion, the same skill, and the same

power of imposing on matter the direction of that spirit.

Before them, only the Egyptians, when they made the smallest objects, had had the power of giving the aspect of organic life to the minerals of the earth. The fired earthenware of the Japanese has the appearance of animal tissues, or viscera steeped in the sulphur of volcanoes. Their netsukes, the millions of intimate bibelots and mischievous trinkets of which they reaped a sudden harvest in the seventeenth century, are palpitating little things whose ivory, lacquer, or metal our fingers love to caress, as if they were tiny, warm animals hiding in the hollow of our hands. Capable of casting the largest bronze statues that the world possesses, seated colossuses whose raised finger and whose smile dominate houses and forests from afar, these artists have also embroidered in iron and cut it into lace. They found alloys, unknown before, which give to brass the veining of a marble; they mixed and harmonized the metals as a painter amalgamates and

UTAMARO (1753–1806). Kitoki taking the breast, print in colors. (*H. Vever Collection.*)

grinds colors and assigns to each its part. Iron, the bronzes black or green, tin, gold, and silver, are orchestrated as in the processes of the print makers. Mother-of-pearl and ivory are associated with them, with the intimacy that the sky and the clouds have with the form of the earth. The old suits of mail, in which hammered copper and iron, lacquer and steel, are bound together by cords of crêpe and silk, look like great black scarabs. The Japanese have only to open their windows, and butterflies and grasshoppers, stamens falling from flowers, leaves torn from trees, and the broken wing cases of insects enter and fall here and there, wherever the breath of spring blows them—on paper fans, on earthen pots, bronze vases, lacquer scabbards, and iron sword guards. The fragile life of the ferns and the insects is mingled by the Japanese artists with social and family and military life. Even from pools of blood come little creatures of gold.

VI

It was the period when art resolutely left the temples and the castles to overflow the street, as after the great centuries of Greece. It was the period when Matahei,[1] a direct, sumptuous, and rare painter, turned his back on dogmatic teaching and opened the way to that "low school" which expresses with the greatest evocative force, to Occidental eyes, the everyday soul of Japan. The genius of Korin, alone and free, the struggle of Goshin (1741–1811) against a half return to the Chinese school –favored by Okio (1732–95), the powerful portrayer of great wild birds—and above all, the appearance of prints, popularized by the severe harmonies of Moronobu (1638–1711) and of

[1] Middle of the eighteenth century.

UTAMARO (1753–1806). The Mirror, print. (*Louvre.*)

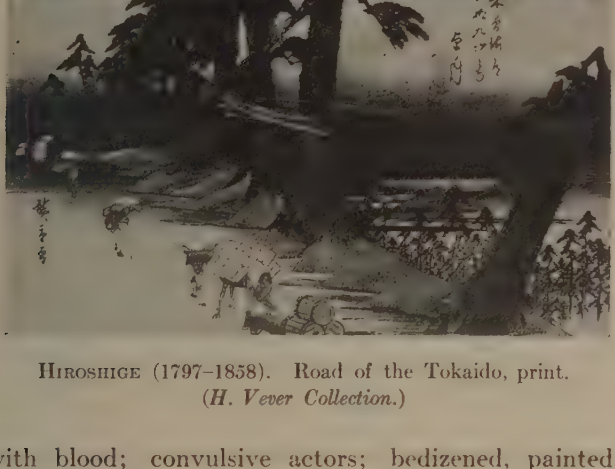
engraving in colors which was invented by Kiyonobu (1667–1729)—all this protected and helped along the activity of the school of the people. Netsukes, potteries, lacquers, inros, and surimonos were sold in every bazaar.

Prints invade the houses of the middle classes and of the common people. Views of the sea, of the moun-

HIROSHIGE (1797–1858). The Shower, print.
(*H. Vever Collection.*)

tains and the woods, the dresses of passing women, pennants, signs, colored-paper lanterns, the whole noisy, bustling, twinkling fairyland of the Japanese, permitted the engravers of the people's prints to expend, in miraculous profusion, the fantasy and power of their genius as colorists, dramatists, and story-tellers. Europe came to know Japan by this popularized art, by this infinite subdividing of the central force that Sesshiu, Motonobu, and Korin revealed to their country for the glory of man. It is not altogether the fault of Europe if, in unpacking its boxes of tea, its lacquer caskets, and its bamboo furniture, it hardly

saw more at first than the slightly comical exterior of the Japanese soul. For only the externals were at first conveyed by that rising sea of little colored papers on which stretched out parades of screen figures in epic posture; gnarled landscapes; warriors streaked



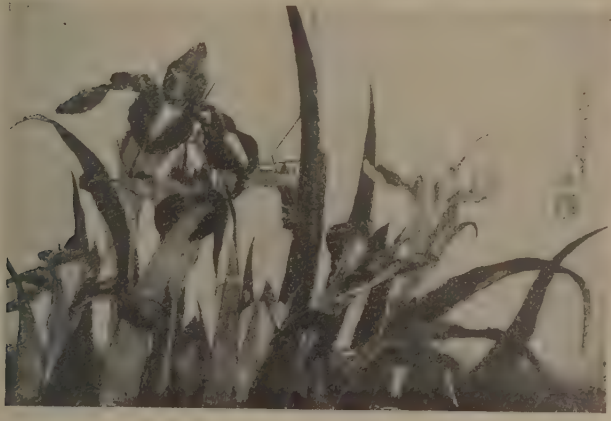
HIROSHIGE (1797–1858). Road of the Tokaido, print.
(*H. Vever Collection.*)

with blood; convulsive actors; bedizened, painted, pale women; and artisans, fishermen, reapers, and children—all a little droll—and multicolored, gesticulating crowds, and evening festivals on the waters. In that strange confusion the surprised senses of Europe could for some time discover nothing but violent colors and disjointed gestures, and it was only little by little that there came to be perceived a power of orchestration and a passion for characterizing things that carried a flood of revealing sensations into the Occidental mind. How should we, without Hiroshige, have witnessed the progressive illumination and darkening of the skies over the islands of Japan, how should

we have discovered the limpidity of the great dawns that come up over their horizon lines, the tall, bare trunks of the pines which shoot up from the Japanese roadsides, giving glimpses between of the deep azure of the air and the sea, the somber harmony of the snows, the mass of the waters which are almost black and against which white sails follow one another? He has shown us how the rainstorms drive the birds and bend the treetops, he has shown us the poetry of the blue nights of his country when the trees are in flower, and how its lakes are lit up by fireworks and the lanterns that dance above the wooden bridges; we see the crowded boats and the musicians that play in them. How should we have known Japan without the pure Utamaro who frequented the courtesans and stopped at doorsteps to see mothers giving the breast to their little ones; and without the trenchant Toyokuni, the boon companion of the actors; and without Shunsho, who spread the colors on his prints like streams of flowers; and without Kiyonaga, the reserved lover of the long feminine forms, the bare legs, breasts, shoulders, and arms that look out from amid the discreet harmonies of silk kimonos and half-lit houses; and without Harunobu, around whom women, like flowering reeds, enchant the earth; and without the infinite Hokusai, how should we have assimilated the value of the lines which, outside the realm of all scientific perspective, solely by their expressive force, symbolize the succession of the planes in unlimited space? How could we do otherwise than forget that they no longer knew Sesshiu, Motonobu, and Korin as their models when, to intoxicate our eyes, their flat tints shook out before us the folds and lining of the robes and combined them into orchestral harmonies? We see this clearly, even from our distance, as when one is on a height from which hollows and projections are

effaced, one discovers the design of a great landscape garden.

With flowers of green or blue, with flowers of flame, with red leaves and golden leaves, the Japanese embroidered robes in which the dawn rises or the daylight falls, and all the blood of the veins is spread out on them and all the snow of the mountains as it glares in



HOKUSAI (1760 1849). Iris, print. (*Private Collection.*)

the sunlight; the fiery clouds that float in the twilight are on those robes, and the fields veiled in mist—rose, mauve, or azure—and the fruits whose downy skin turns color as they ripen, and the silent rain of glycine petals as they fall on sleeping water, and the pink and white haze of the flowering fruit trees. Tossed upon the robes as the wind might toss them, the Japanese weavers and embroiderers have set frightened birds in flight, and into the folds they have twisted convulsive monsters. In the crinkling silk they have opened up landscapes where leaves and waters murmur,

and—as if seen through autumn foliage—the innumerable suns of the imperial chrysanthemum appear. The blacks, those deep and absolute blacks that almost always have a part in their designs, by the stripes or spots on cloths, or, in their pictures, by the note of the hair as it piles up in flat coils, or by the fat arabesque of the powerful ideograms, their blacks are the muted accompaniment against which the violent melodies shriek their drama and then grow calm and then re-echo and die. . . . When the women pass in procession across the prints of Nippon, we do not know surely whether the flowers, the dead leaves, or the whirling snowflakes on their silk kimonos were scattered there by the summer, the autumn, or the winter they have traversed—or whether it is not just the walk of these far-away creatures which spreads about them the summer, the autumn, or the winter. Everything sings when they come, even violent death. The landscape responds to them, the landscape with its pink branches from which the petals will fall like snowflakes, the landscape where the flowers resist the frost, the landscape with its limpid skies over serene waters, the nocturnal landscape where women—moving gardens in themselves—pass against backgrounds uniformly black.

The sap of Japan, in these millions of flying leaves, fell like ever-heavier raindrops, but also it got farther and farther from its roots. The country had been closed for two hundred years, deaf to the voices from without—and the voices from within beat against unscalable walls. Too long deprived of the opportunity for interchange, which is life, impotent to renew itself, its soul contracted into itself, grew enervated, and lost itself, little by little, in detail and in anecdote. Let us admit as much. The art of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, despite the abundance in

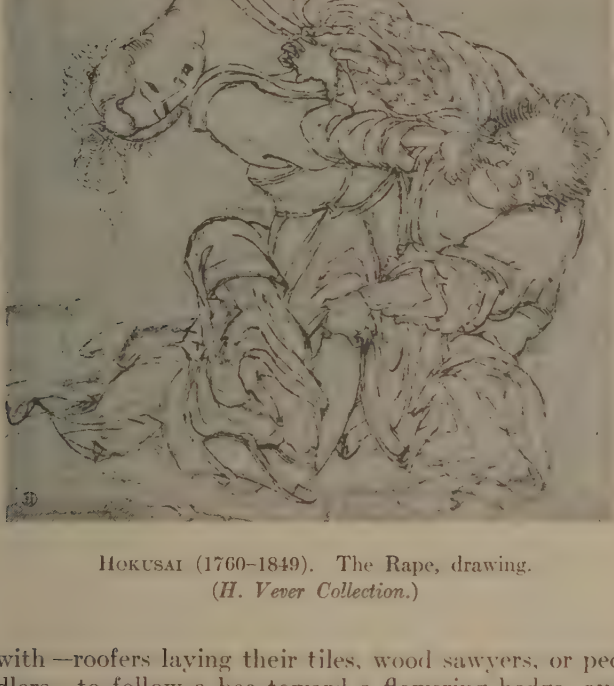
which it spouted forth, despite its verve and its life, seems a little frail and troubled, feverish and caricaturish beside that of the preceding epochs. The

HOKUSAI (1760–1849). Drawing. (*Louvre.*)

great Hokusai himself, the protean poet, the man with a hundred names who filled more than five hundred volumes and twenty thousand prints with his thought,

"the old man mad about drawing," the distracted vagabond who gave its climax to the art of the people and scattered the spirit of Japan to the four corners of the heavens, as a great wind despoils the forests of autumn—the great Hokusai himself is an expression of the decadence. He has for his suffering fellow-creatures the unconcealed passion that was perhaps possessed, among us, by Rembrandt alone; he had that powerful minuteness that one finds only in Dürer, and that love of aërial landscapes in which Claude Lorrain and Veronese saw the tremble of their gold and silver; his verve—cynical or terrible or bantering or sinister or harrowing—is the same as that with which Goya tore from the world of forms the swift symbols of the tragedies of his heart. He has the immensity of knowledge and the skill of all the workmen of his nation. A pupil of Shunsho, a lover of Sesshiu, of Tanyu, and of Korin, there was not a fiber of his immeasurable spirit that did not root itself into theirs, to divide and spread in limbs and branches through all the beings and all the plants that he encountered during his very long life—when he roamed through the woods and along the streams, when he breathed the mist of the cascades or crossed some humpbacked bridge to follow the busy crowd till it dispersed in the streets, the gardens, and the houses. He spoke the humblest and the proudest word that has come from the lips of an artist: "When I am a hundred and ten years old, everything that comes from my brush, a point or a line, will be alive." He has described every kind of labor and told the tale of all the days. He did the things that the peasants do, and the workmen, and the fishermen, and the soldiers, and the people of the fairs, and the children. With a tenderness that is now merry, now quite pure, he has set down the story of their games, their trades, and their passions. He

has loved all women, their hard, pointed breasts, and their beautiful arms that flow in such swift, sure lines. He did not have time to tell us everything, though at any moment he would leave the people he was talking



HOKUSAI (1760–1849). The Rape, drawing.
(*H. Vever Collection.*)

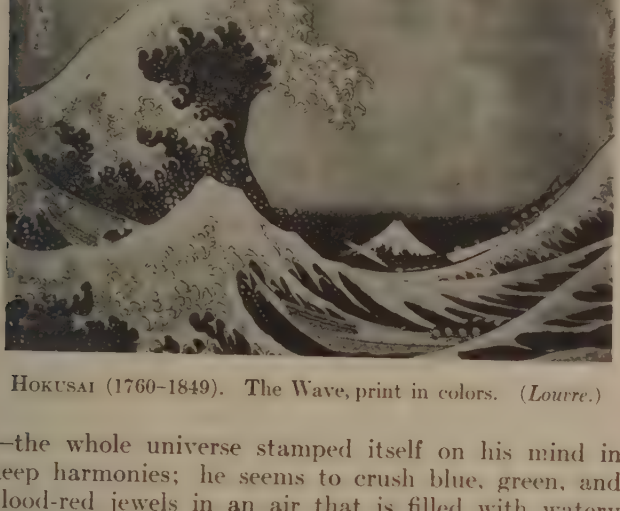
with —roofers laying their tiles, wood sawyers, or peddlers—to follow a bee toward a flowering hedge, over which he would discover a gardener at his work. He would lie down in the sun for his noonday siesta, but without any intention of sleeping; he would not make the slightest movement; he would hold his breath; at the slightest vibration he would raise an eyelid; he

would follow the buzzing spot until it had settled on his bare arm; he would let himself be stung so as to study the monstrous eye, the sucking proboscis, the metal corselet, and the thin elastic members that the insect is forever rubbing together. When he had gotten wet to the bone while looking so carefully at the rain, he

HOKUSAI (1760–1849). Drawing. (*From The Kokka.*)

was in haste for the wind to come and dry him so that he might see the whirling flight of the dead leaves, the lanterns of the festival, and the feathers swept from wings. If he climbed a mountain and came out above its low-lying mists, it was to get a sudden sight of some peak isolated in crystal space, and, as he came down again, to discover through rifts in the fog the thatched roofs, and the rice fields, and swarms of men under their round straw hats, and junks scattered over an opaque distance. When he had seen the pale moon rise in the black sky over a world empty of forms, he waited impatiently for the red sun to discolor the air so that he might seize the appearance of the world,

in the islands of gold spattered with dark touches that sow the inner seas, and the blue or red houses that appear amid the pines, and the wandering sails, and the conical volcano, now crowned with blood, now with silver or opal, now with the violet, the rose, or the lilac that one sees only in half-opened flowers. The oily oscillation of the sea, the glaciers thrusting up above the clouds, the motionless or restless tops of the woods

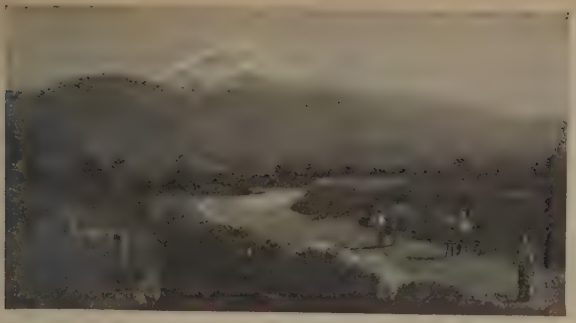


HOKUSAI (1760–1849). The Wave, print in colors. (*Louvre.*)

—the whole universe stamped itself on his mind in deep harmonies; he seems to crush blue, green, and blood-red jewels in an air that is filled with watery vapor and that transmits light to things. . . . He commands form like a hero, and at will he is lyrical or philosophical—by turns or simultaneously—and an epic poet and a satirical poet, living in the most frightful nightmares after leaving the most peaceful realities, or while still among them, and passing at ease from the most unhealthful invention to the noblest vision. . . .

And yet, through his swift art, analytical, feverish, and hurried—too anecdotal oftentimes—he is an expression of decadence. One is tempted to say that he foresees the end of Old Japan, that he wants to prepare a living encyclopædia of it, hastening to tell everything about it in direct, immediate notes that strike like lightning, as if to leave its image—complex, multiform, disordered, and immense—to the future.

After him Yosai still addresses a discreet, melancholy, and pure farewell to the kimono-clad women who pass before the backgrounds of flowered branches — and the end has come. The revolution that throws Japan into the path of the Occident brutally extinguishes its art life. It is like a wheat field laid low by the wind of cannons. And notwithstanding, Japan has yielded nothing, abandoned nothing of her soul. She has imposed on the world her right to her life. Now she must find, in the reserves of her silence, all her passion for comprehending and all her power for expressing. The soul of a people cannot die entirely while the people is still living. Already some of her artists seem to be reviving, to be finding again the spirit of their race, broadened and renewed by the thought of the Occident. One day, certainly a great art will be born of that meeting. But the present attempts are premature. Japan has a more immediate and more positive purpose to achieve now. After attaining military strength, let her, therefore, acquire economic strength. In the rise of the energy that leads to action she will surprise the creative spirit that will spurt forth one day. Later, she will be rich. Then poor. And the cycle will begin again.



Popocatepetl, Mexico

Chapter IV. THE TROPICS

I

ALL peoples feel the need, at some moment in their history, to come into that prolonged and fecund contact with the world of the senses from which there comes forth the verbal, musical, or plastic representation of the mind. But each one of them speaks its own language; thus a given people which has composed poems or orchestrated symphonies remains incapable of rising to plastic generalizations of a distinguishing accent. Outside of the French, the Italians, the Spaniards, the Flemings, the Dutch, sometimes the Germans—I hesitate to say the English—the societies of mediæval or modern Europe have left the industrial art of the people only to attempt imitations, more or less disguised, of the great foreign schools. Now all the races, even the most primitive, possess the faculty of decorating pots, carving wooden figurines, making furniture, weaving stuffs, and carving metal. That is to say that any people in Europe which has not, in the general onward

sweep of Occidental culture, known how to utilize the stammerings of these rudimentary arts, to make up a language of its own, a living language that expresses it in its highest desires, must seek to realize them otherwise than by images, which it does not know how to use because it does not love them. Besides, as civilization becomes universal, it perverts the needs of the people's soul, and the manifestations of that soul take on more and more of a mongrel character. To find a primitive art that retains its sap and can impart new and strong emotions to sensibilities that have preserved or regained their first ingenuousness, we must go to those peoples who have remained primitives.

AFRICA. Helmet (Guinea).
(*Guillaume Collection.*)

It is in the tropics or near the polar regions that men, in the heart of modern times, have preserved practically intact the spirit of their most distant ancestors. It is only there that they have not passed beyond the stage of naturistic fetishism and the grouping by tribes.

In one region the heat is too intense; in the other region the cold is too severe. Here the seasons are too distinct and too heavy; there they are too torpid and of too slow a rhythm. Among the peoples of the tropics, even the most rudimentary effort to get food and shelter is practically unnecessary, the effort to rise is too hard, and with the polar peoples the only use of effort is to secure an existence, which is vegetative and precarious, the nature of the country being too ungrateful for the inhabitant to imagine that he could modify his surroundings to his profit. Finally, neither in the one region nor in the other have any great human migrations passed, to renew the race, to bring it the breath of the world outside, because the course of these migrations has been turned aside by the ice, the deserts, the overdense forests, and the too-vast oceans.

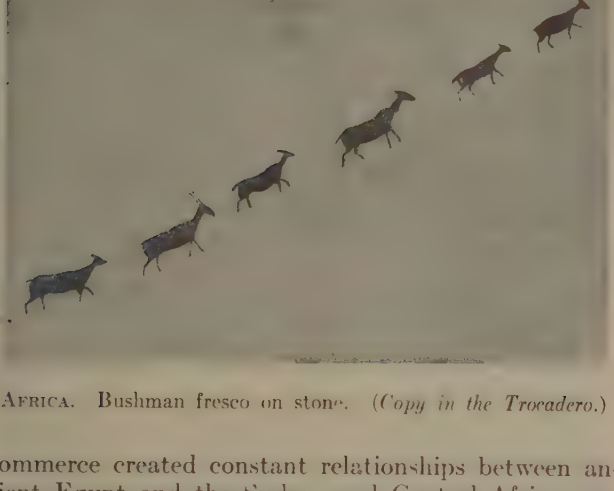
AFRICA. Fetish of the Bakoutas, copper and wood. (*Guillaume Collection.*)

The black race is perhaps that one among the backward peoples which has manifested the least aptitude for raising itself above the elementary human instincts that result in the formation of language, the first social crystallizations, and the industries indispensable to them. Even when transplanted in great numbers to places like North America that have

reached the most original, even if not the highest, degree of civilization that we find in modern times, the black man remains, after centuries, what he was—an impulsive child, ingenuously good, and ingenuously cruel; as in the case of other children, all of his acts spring from immediate sensation. And yet his was the only one of the great primitive races which, inhabiting a massive continent in large numbers, lacked neither arms nor heads to modify its surroundings, discover new relationships, and create new ideas. But this continent is divided into twenty sections by the sands, the mountains, the brush, and the virgin forests; it is infested with wild beasts, it is feverish and torrid, and is cut in two by the equator. Its northern shores, those on the Mediterranean, are habitable for white men, and only these regions have, from the beginnings of history, participated in man's great movements toward the future.

AFRICA. Bronze from Benin. (*British Museum.*)

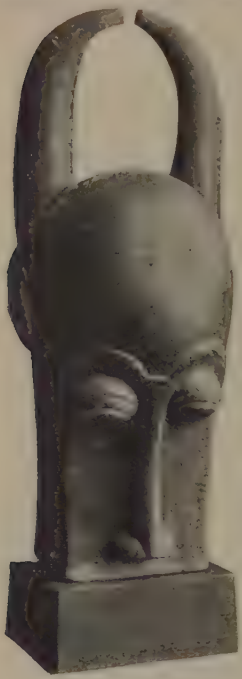
However, if we revert to the earliest times we discover an Africa that was probably identical with what it is at this hour, and consequently on the same level with that of the tribes that peopled the north and the west of Europe—perhaps on a higher level. War and



AFRICA. Bushman fresco on stone. (*Copy in the Trocadero.*)

commerce created constant relationships between ancient Egypt and the Sudan, and Central Africa participated in the development of the civilization of the Nile. From that period on, iron was worked in Nigritia, while the old world hardly knew yet how to work in bronze, and the African jewelry that is still made by the Somalis of East Africa, the Pahouins, the Ashantis, and the Haoussas of West Africa, was brought by caravans from the confines of Upper Egypt to the markets of Thebes and Memphis. The jewelry is heavy, of a thick and compact material, with incrustations of blue and red stones whose opaque glow spots the circles of mat gold or of somber silver. Geo-

metrical figures are dear to all primitive peoples, whether they paint their pots, decorate their huts, weave their clothing, or stripe the skin of their faces or their bodies; and cutting into the African jewelry in every direction we find again these geometrical forms—short, fat, dense, and pressed closely together. As mathematics, the science of inert forms, preceded biology, so geometrical ornament preceded living ornament, and certain child peoples, incapable of interpreting life, have arrived, in ornamental art, at the highest degree of power. The human mind proceeds always from the simple to the complex, but when the great artist appears to unite the most differentiated living forms through a single arabesque, or when modern science tries to express all its conquests in mathematical symbols, the mind is invariably brought back to primitive sources, the very ones at which instinct slaked its thirst. The result is always the impressive agreement between the most obscure feeling and the highest form of reason.



AFRICA. Great helmet of the Baoules for the Gouli dance (Ivory Coast). (*Guillaume Collection.*)

In general, we need not seek, in the art of the Negroes, anything more than that still unreasoned feeling which merely obeys the most elementary demands of rhythm and of symmetry. When the youthful peoples follow

AFRICA. The Two Principles (Upper Niger).
(*Guillaume Collection.*)

the instinct which urges them to impose on the living forms that come from their hands a vaguely architectural appearance, an awkward, rough symmetry, they unquestionably obey an imperious desire for synthesis, but this synthesis is of the kind that precedes experience and not the kind that follows it. The sculpture in wood of the Negroes is still very far from the great Egyptian sculpture, for example, whose advent coincides with that of a social and religious edifice of the most powerful architecture. Perhaps it is a first sketch or presentiment of Egyptian art that we see in Negro sculpture—one which may carry us back almost as far as the appearance of man in Africa. From such a beginning may well have come the sudden start for the ascent, through the long centuries in the great fertile valley where the black and white races fuse. Then, after the slowest, the loftiest, the most conscious stylization, after the art of the Nile has sunk into the sands, the Negro again prolongs the immobile inspiration of Africa until our own time. But to him we must not look for metaphysical abstractions, for he gives us only his sensations, as short-lived as they are violent—an attempt to satisfy the most immediate needs that spring from a rudimentary fetishism. And perhaps it is even because of his fearful candor in showing us rough surfaces, short limbs, bestial heads, and

AFRICA. Tribal fetish (Ivory Coast). (*Guillaume Collection.*)

drooping breasts that he reaches his great expressiveness. These sculptures in wood—black wood on which

POLYNESIA. Sculptures in wood. (*British Museum.*)

the pure blues, the raw greens, the brown reds take on a violence so naïve that it becomes terrifying—have a simplicity in their ferocity, an innocence in their mood

of murder, that command a kind of respect. Brute nature circulates in them, and burning sap and black blood. Although man is afraid of them, he cannot help recognizing and loving his impulses—rendered concrete in the crawling crocodiles and the crouching gorillas which are sketched by long strokes in the wood and which decorate the doors and beams of his hut or the sides of his tomtoms.

How are we to discover, in the confusion and the ebb and flow of the tribes and the industries of Africa, the stronger currents which would have led, without a colonization of the continent by the European peoples, to a conquest by the blacks of a more enlightened inner world? The Haoussas and the Ashantis, especially, devote themselves to all the basic industries—weaving, ceramics, iron-working, gold-working, embroidery, jewelry, and carving in wood and ivory, and those of the Negroes of the Sudan or of western Africa who yield to the current of Moslem propaganda have a presentiment, on coming into contact with the spiritual spark of Islam, of the existence of a higher life. They frequently surpass the Berber artisan in working metal and leather for articles of luxury. But we must go back farther into the past of this dark land—this land fertilized by blood—and find the traces of a need belonging to a still very confused but strongly affirmed æsthetic order, since destroyed among some of the African peoples, by the immigrations of other black men and the invasions of the whites. Among the natives of Guinea, Niger, the Gaboon, and the Ivory Coast, we find idols, dance and war masks, objects of daily life, and weapons whose prototypes undoubtedly date back to a very ancient period, perhaps an immemorial period, and these works bear witness to a desire for stylization that is not alone very accentuated, but also powerfully original. The plastic synthesis.

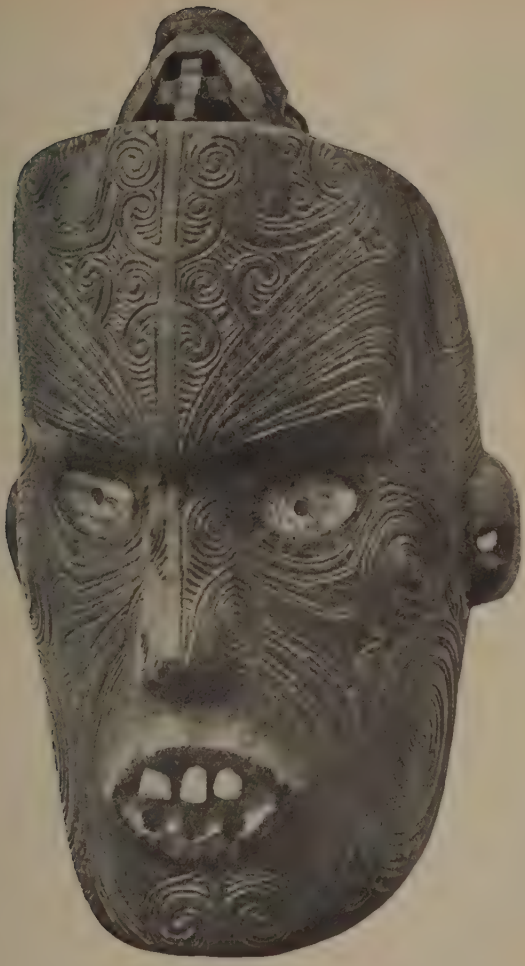
here, borders on geometry. The ensemble of the work is subjected to a kind of schematic rhythm which permits itself the boldest deformations, but always allows certain expressive summits of the object interpreted to remain. The kingdom of Benin, which was one of the first to receive the Portuguese navigators and in which there developed, doubtless about the end of the Middle Ages, the greatest school of Africa, had admirable bronze workers. By their powerful feeling for embryonic life they became very near relatives of the archaic Chinese sculptors, of the Khmers and the Javanese. They twisted black serpents together to make of the rough and scaly coils in which they writhe the supports for copper stools. Their pots often took on the aspect of a human head and with lines of great purity; other vessels were ornamented with strongly built rude, and very summary sculptures in which the familiar silhouettes of the dog, the lion, the cock, the elephant, and the crocodile are indicated, sometimes with a strong tinge of irony. At this period, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Africa seemed, moreover, to be emerging from its long nightmare. The Bushmen, contemporaries of the Negroes of Benin, peopled the south of the continent; far from the

POLYNESIA. Sculpture in wood. (*British Museum.*)

equator, the deserts, and the forests of Central Africa, they lived in a healthier climate where stock raising is possible, where wild beasts are rarer and game is abundant. They could, had they persisted, have given a decisive impetus to the mind of the Negro races. Living more often from rapine than from hunting, their nomadic and adventurous life multiplied their relationships with the tribes and the soil of Africa at the same time that it sharpened their senses and subtilized their mind. On the walls of the grottoes, where they hid the herds they had stolen, they have left frescoes of red ocher in which we see, living again, their hunts, their wars, their dances, and beasts that flee or march in line. The form is only an approximation, but the flat spot is vibrant, and the silhouettes, looking like shadows on a wall, march with a single movement—oxen that are pursued, antelopes climbing a slope, great gray birds crossing the sky.

II

It is the most interesting effort, doubtless, that has been attempted by primitive men since the days of the cave men of Vézère. But this elementary painting seems condemned to have no evolution, to disappear brutally. The warm waters that ended the glacial period obliged the reindeer hunters to flee from western Europe; the Bushmen dispersed on the arrival of the Kafirs, the Boers, and the English; and from day to day the colonization of Australia reduces the number of the aborigines who covered the rocks of the great island with black, sulphurous, red, and blue frescoes which testify to a generalizing spirit whose rudiments are perhaps less visible among the inhabitants of Africa than among certain peoples of Oceanica. Polynesian art, like Oriental art in general, would seem to tend



NEW ZEALAND. War mask. (*British Museum.*)

more especially toward decoration, whereas the character of the art of Africa, like European art, shows itself in a more marked tendency to isolate form in order to examine the activity it possesses within its own limits and within its individual characteristics.

It is true that the climate and landscape of Oceanica offer to the sensibility of the Polynesians resources that are not found in Africa. The dispersal of the race among the thousands of large and small islands, separated by vast expanses of sea, is perhaps the only thing which, preventing the necessary cohesion among the peoples, prevented also a great civilization from being born in the Pacific and from spreading round about. And now it is too late; the conquest of these regions by Europe, the diseases, the alcohol, the morality, and the religion that it brought them have made the Polynesians anæmic, have decimated them and overcome them. The time has already arrived when they are beginning no longer to feel in themselves the poetry of nature which surrounds them and which formed them.

The islands, whose flowered forests spring from seed brought by the wind, cover the blue ocean as the Cyclades of Greece strew the eastern Mediterranean from the promontories of the Peloponnesus to the bays of Asia. Nature is prodigious there—healthy, though sweating with its fecundity, surrounded by perfumes, bursting with flowers, dazzled with its fire-colored birds and its gleaming stones; its forests descend to the water's edge, where they are reflected in the cup of black sapphire incrusted with pearls, where marine monsters dwell in caverns of coral. A beautiful race of men, high of forehead and artists by nature, inhabits the islands; they live in the open air, in the wind from the sea, among splendid forms and the blazing orgy of the colors. The language of the race is harmonious;

dancing and war and music are loved, flowers are woven into crowns and garlands, and when the people gives itself up to love, it is still living with the springs and the sunlight. Its mythology is very near—through its triumphant grace, its perfume of the dawn and of the sky, and through its crystalline symbolism—to the old Ionian legends. Had life been a little less facile,

New Zealand. Wooden box. (*British Museum.*)

had there been unity among the people, a rich future would have awaited them.

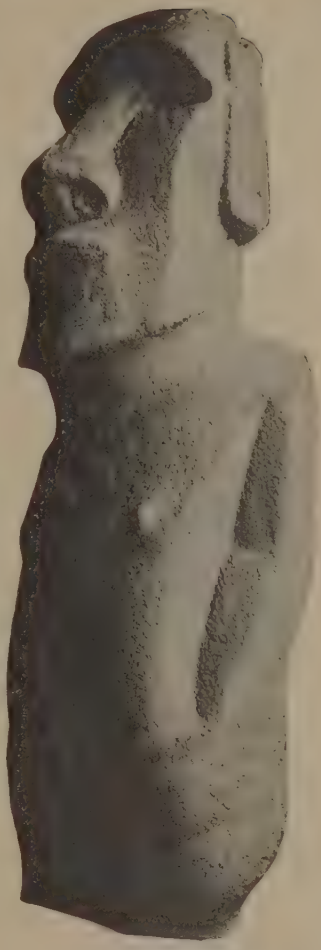
The gods that the Polynesians carved in the soft material of their wood, to be erected on their shores or at the doors of their cabins, are in general more animated than the symmetrical silhouettes cut by the Africans. Perhaps their art is less ingenuously conceived and less severe. There is more tendency to style, it seems, but more skill, and at the same time less strength. The eye sockets, the lips, the nostrils, and the ears become, in the most interesting of these images, the point of departure for long parallel lines, sustained and deeply cut, for spirals and volutes which are the result of the effort to demonstrate religious ideas or to terrify an enemy in war; we find in them a profound and pure agreement between the spirit of the myth and its concrete expression. These are no longer dolls which are terrible only in their candor. They are violently and consciously expressive, with their attri-

butes of killing, with their cruel visages; and the colors that cover them are the symbols of their ferocity in combat and their ardor in love. Whether we consider the grimacing faces on the prows of the long curved boats, or the colossuses sheltered under the branches of the odorous forests—men or monsters daubed with vermilion or with emerald green—we find that all these works have passed the archaic stage represented by the statues of Easter Island, which is to Polynesia what an Egypt still plunged in the original mud would be to a lazy Greece, too much enslaved by the flesh. All are monstrous and alive, all have sprung from the bestial energy unchained by the wild loves and the excited senses of a country drunk with its bursting fruits, its multicolored bays, and the multicolored plumes that rain on it like the sunlight. Long ago, before the white man came to force his somber clothing on the people and to dry up their poetic spirit, the great wooden idols were sisters to the enormous flowers and the birds and the naked men who roamed the woods, tattooed from their feet to their foreheads, painted with red, green, and blue, and covered with great undulating lines that were arranged to bring out the forms, to accompany with their flashes the rhythm of the runners, and to accentuate the muscles of the face in their terrifying play of expression during moments of debauchery and cruelty.

Their purpose was to captivate women, to terrify the enemy, and, through an instinct even more obscure and vast, to play, in the symphony of nature, the role dictated by the great corollas hanging from the tangled vines which bind the giant trees, by the glossy coats of the animals, by the fiery wings, and by the sinking of the stars into the sea. All the primitive peoples of the tropics who go naked in the freedom of the light have, in this way and at all times, loved to paint or tattoo

their skins with color—the Negroes of Africa and the Indians of America, as well as the Polynesians. But with the Polynesian, the tattooing takes on a brilliancy, and evinces a care for rhythm and life, that we find nowhere else, save among the peoples that derive from the nations of Oceanica or who have been in touch with them for a long time. For their geometrical ornament, the Japanese substituted figures of birds, dragons, chimeras, women—which are really pictures, through their movement and composition. The New Zealanders, if they preserved in their tattooing the geometrical ornament of their Oceanic ancestors, brought to it a precision, a violence, a will to style that would almost suffice to define them as artists if their plastic genius had not revealed itself by other manifestations.

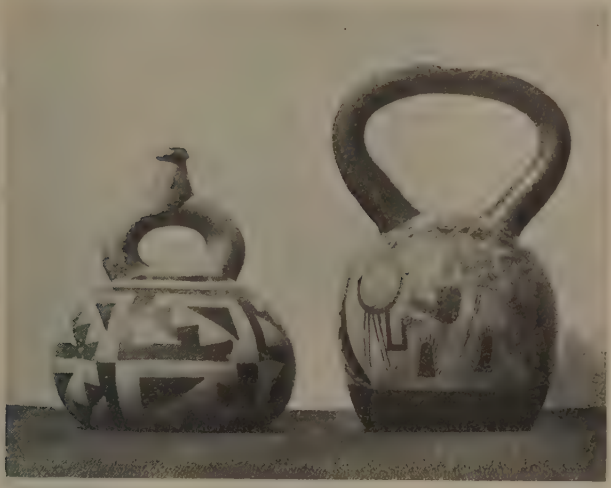
Wherever they may have come from—the Polynesian migrations



EASTER ISLAND. Colossal sculpture, lava. (*British Museum.*)

across the Pacific have scarcely more of a history than those of the birds that wander from climate to climate they retained the ardent sensualism that distinguishes the populations of Oceanica. Like the latter, they loved to set up posts sculptured with atrocious figures, and to decorate their weapons, the utensils of their industries and households, their boxes and vases, with incised painting that ostensibly is there to observe and perpetuate their traditional rites, their practices of exorcism and of magic, but that in reality expresses that human love of form, of line, and of color which inspires us to harmonize ourselves with nature, so as to understand it better and day by day to recreate it with its own elements. But a new and great thing was appearing among them, an art which indicated the rise of the Maoris to a decreasingly chaotic and a more luminous consciousness of their destiny in the world. It lasted until the English, in the middle of the last century, interrupted the development of the natives. They had practiced cannibalism, it is true, but only after they had entirely destroyed the rare specimens of the antediluvian species which still wandered through the silent forests at the time when their war canoes, ornamented with frightful visages, arrived in the great strange islands, which were devoid of all birds, of insects, of reptiles, and which possessed at most a few dwarfish mammals. The Maoris had been in the country only some three hundred years, perhaps, and it was with difficulty that they managed to organize themselves into tribes, which numbered some tens of thousands of men, and in which the births barely filled the gaps made by the massacres of prisoners of war who were offered as a sacrifice to the gods. And notwithstanding, their soul was already escaping from its silence. They had built villages in the center of which the fortified *Pa* contained the embryo of the

future city. Four or five communal houses sculptured from top to bottom, schools, museums of tradition and legend, temples, inclosures for sport and for assemblies in which sat the councils of administration and of war. The decorative forms we find here are always violent, to be sure; they tell of killing, they are red with blood



PERU. Painted vases. (*British Museum.*)

and contorted into infernal attitudes, but already they manifest a persistent demand for balance and for architectural rhythm. Must we not, therefore, see, as the dominating influence in them, the majestic landscapes where the activity of the Maoris took place and the effort put forth by the people to maintain that activity? They had passed beyond the dangerous region of the tropical zone. The perpetual spring no longer enervated them. Their islands, like those of Japan, ran the

gamut of climate from that of Italy to that of Scotland. They placed their villages beside the opal lakes set in cups of lava, that are surrounded by cold springs and boiling geysers, under the shelter of immense mountains

PERU. Vase, terra cotta. (*British Museum.*)

where active volcanoes alternate with glaciers that descend to the sea; and when the Maoris followed their pine-bordered streams they came upon fiords that reflected the forests and the snows in the shadowy masses of that southern ocean in which no human face had ever seen its image. A great civilization, a great art, could and should have been born there. The mats woven of

phormium, hanging at the doors of the huts, shone with burning colors; the rocks were covered with frescoes in which the blue of the ice and the lakes lived again; the villages, built all of wood, with their sturdy houses whose roofs have a steep slope and with their

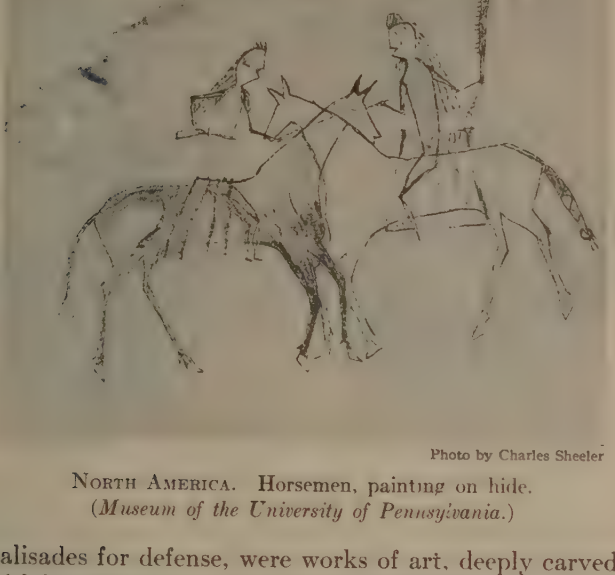


Photo by Charles Sheeler

NORTH AMERICA. Horsemen, painting on hide.
(*Museum of the University of Pennsylvania.*)

palisades for defense, were works of art, deeply carved with horrible figures which were tattooed like the people themselves and framed in prodigious series of curved lines, of interwoven spirals, of rhythmical coils, thick and fat, whose calculated mazes combined into the form of the human face. From afar, these forests of sculptured wood had the appearance of the arborescent ferns, tufted and slender, which covered the country. There is a little of the decorative spirit of the artists of Japan, but it is more impetuous and barbarous;

quite disdainful of the material employed, it lacks that irony and that minuteness of observation which sometimes dampens enthusiasm. The character of the works is ferocious. Certain sculptured visages are of a structure so abstract and so epitomized that upon looking at them one is reminded of the greatest masters of form, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the archaic Japanese—and there is, besides, something austere and trenchant, a terrible purity that belongs to the Maoris alone.

Certainly, no other people among the Polynesians has reached so high a level. If there is, between the races of Oceanica and the ancient inhabitants of Easter Island, a connection dating back beyond the range of history, it is the Maoris upon whom we must look as the most legitimate inheritors of the line, for the art of the Maoris, as living as that of the Papuans and the other natives of the Pacific, aspires even more than theirs to realize those edifices of animated geometry which we can see as the goal of the hieratic art of the ancestral race. Its island, an extinct volcano, is deserted. But the rocks are dug out in hieroglyphics and figures of birds, fish, and men. Finished or unfinished, more than five hundred colossuses stand erect on the shores or in the center of the dead craters. They are terrible figures, massive and summary, holding their arms at their sides; almost without a cranium, they have bestial faces in which the nose is prominent and dilated and the eyes are wide open; the broad planes in which they are established look as if they were cut with an ax, but centuries, perhaps, were needed before the people could work the basalt of which the figures are made. Why are they there, horribly alone, with their faces to the eternal sea, and what do they mean if it is not our inextinguishable need to discover ourselves and recognize ourselves in

the rebellious or docile material that our soil furnishes to us? A seismic catastrophe must have interrupted the works and isolated them from the world. There are tools at the feet of the figures, but no other traces of humanity. Where did those men who erected them take refuge? Whence did they come? What unknown sources had slaked the thirst of these forerunners of

NORTH AMERICA. Vases, painted terra cotta.
(*Ethnographical Bureau of the United States.*)

the strange races of Oceanica—with the Indo-Europeans, the most gifted of our planet, and antedating, perhaps, the peoples of Asia? They were the victims of their surroundings. The Polynesians had doubtless come from the Dutch Indies, but that was long before the period of history and previous to the time of the Indian civilizations. The present populations of the Dutch Indies, those Malays who also peopled Madagascar, have not the proud and strong grace of the Polynesians, nor their free life, nor their ardor in love, nor their artist mind with its ability to generalize.

The thought of the Malays is timid, their character indifferent; they accept the beliefs that their successive masters from the west bring to them. Their ancient art derives from the art of the Indians, their modern art does not go beyond the monotonous practice of primitive industry. It was doubtless through contact with the sea winds and through their ecstatic abandon of themselves to the great currents of the ocean that the Polynesians escaped from the apathy of such origins and were able to call forth the formidable dream that was interrupted, but whose enigma is offered to us in the giants of Easter Island. Who knows if they did not go much farther and, crossing the islands that have disappeared, carried on by the waves, if they did not bring their dream face to face with the eastern sun whose source was hidden from them by the fiery rampart of the Cordilleras? And did not a gulf open up behind them, perhaps, and swallow up the land of their birth, even within their memory?

III

One can believe such a thing when one tries to recover the trace of the old inhabitants of the dead island. Outside the art of the Polynesians nothing reminds one more of the spirit of archaic Oceanica than the hieratical forms found among the Aymaras of the Peruvian Andes. There, as in the Egypt of the Middle Empire, the architectonic formula seemed arrested. In exchange for the lands distributed to the Incas, their bureaucratic socialism doubtless exacted from them that blind and definitive submission of soul to everything touching the spiritual domain. The Aymaras had reached the point of no longer seeking anything more in nature than motives for ideographs, which they stylized with relentless insistence. Hiero-

glyphics, carved out and flat, and composite images in which vague human forms appeared among the precise and mysterious interlacings of geometrical figures, framed the monolithic gates of the temples and the palaces. Pizarro melted down and minted the silver and golden statues which the Incas erected to their heroes. Were they of a freer art? Doubtless they were. . . . The Quichua pottery of the same time bears witness to a charming popular spirit. These peoples were good. They loved men and beasts. They looked on them roguishly, but very gently. Almost all their pots, their bottles, their alcarazas for keeping water cold, had heads of animals as spouts, and arms or paws for handles, and the forms are unforeseen, sometimes beautiful; almost always monstrous, they are grotesque, contorted, blown up, crushed

MAYA ART.
Honduras. Stele.
(*Museum of Natural History, New York.*)

in, warped, or paunchlike. Egypt had also reserved the hieratic forms for the face of the sanctuaries, and spent her sorrow in the shadows where, like Peru, she buried her mummies. She also loved to give animal forms to her smallest objects, to finish off pitchers and jugs with the heads of cats, of panthers, of jackals, and

Mexico. Palace of Mitla.

cynocephali, even as the Peruvians drew out the tops of their vessels or flattened them down into the heads of dogs, of pumas, of ducks, and alligators. But in Egypt there was a purer and a loftier spirit. And if she was sometimes moved by her bent for irony, a very discreet and subtle tendency, she seldom went so far as caricature. Instead of heaping up her cadavers in earthen vases, she stretched them out in troughs of granite. She possessed the cult of form even beyond the grave, and purified the form to the point of abstraction. The wing of the mind had touched it—and our world was to issue from that contact.

But in Peru also there was no lack either of ingenious

social systems or of great dreams. Does not an Aymar legend show the creator peopling the earth with statues which he animates and to which he intrusts the mission of civilizing the world? In no other cosmogony is this profound myth to be found. The old Peruvian poets had felt that it is only when there is a contact between the soul and form that the lightning flashes, and that it is for the artist to introduce into the universe more order, a harmony which is forever evolving and which projects upon the future an anticipated realization of our hope. But the murderous climate and the debilitation of the people, who were decimated by the bloody sacrifices which the priests offered to the sun, upset the prophecies of those who sang the epic of the race and neutralized the best-intentioned sociological teachings. In that torrid and trembling part of America, the most gigantic efforts were to miscarry suddenly, upon the shock of contact with a superior civilization. For in spite of everything, the Spanish civilization was superior, despite the killing and rapine of its envoys and the Inquisition which they brought with them. These adventurers, coming from an old world where the human mind was boiling with the deepest agitation to which it had been a prey for fifteen centuries, these violent

MEXICO. The stone of the hearts. (*Museum of the City of Mexico.*)

madmen, who had stumbled against this continent in trying to encircle the earth, represented the conquest of the future against themselves.

They had only to touch a finger to the rotten fruit, for it to fall from the old tree in which the sap no longer rose. In Mexico, even more than in Peru, the incessant ritual massacres had plunged the people into

Mexico. The plumed serpent. (*Trocadero.*)

a dull torpor that rendered them incapable of resisting the effort of the invader for more than two years. The sole remaining energy which they recovered was used to help Cortez in driving the Aztecs from Tenochtitlan,[1] which the latter had held under their yoke for two centuries. All things considered, the religion of Torquemada immolated fewer victims than did that of Montezuma. And for a thousand years, moreover,

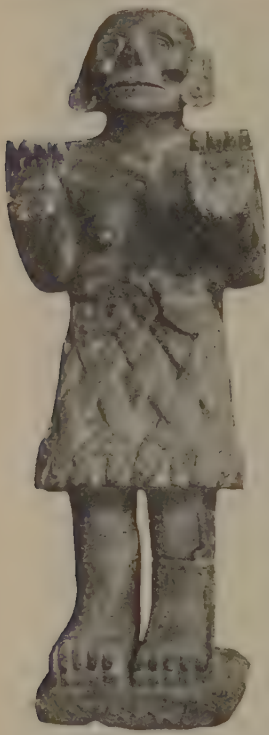
[1] Aztec name for the City of Mexico.

such deep waves of men had been passing over this soil that there came over its ancient possessors an absolute indifference as to which master must be paid and to which god should have its tithes of gold and of blood.

Like the Dorians in primitive Greece, like the Teutons in the Italy that was the contemporary of the civilizations of Mexico, all the conquerors had come from the north—the Toltecs in the sixth century, the Chichimecas in the ninth, the Aztecs in the thirteenth. From what direction they had entered, whether from the Orient or the Occident, from Greenland or the Bering Sea, we do not know—from both directions, doubtless. We find all types among the present-day natives or in the old sculptures of Mexico: Mongolian Asia and probably Scandinavian

Mexico. Toltec column.

Europe are represented there, perhaps also the sunken Atlantis. The people had, doubtless, crossed the polar regions, carrying with them, in their migrations, some of those Inoits who still inhabit the shores of the Arctic Ocean and who are said by certain scholars to be the descendants of the oldest artist people of the earth, the cave dwellers of Périgord who moved northward with the cold. They had come into contact also with the nomadic Indians of North America, leaving some of their own people among them and taking with them some of the latter to the south. At some periods they had spent winters with the polar races, huddled in their squalid, ill-smelling huts, and, in the dim light, had, with the natives, given rhythm to the interminable polar night by preparing the apparatus for fishing, hunting, and command—the reindeer horn, the jaws of the reindeer and the seal, and whalebone which they engraved with images as precise as the memories of their monotonous life that recommenced each year with the return of the pale sun. At other periods, while moving down the Mississippi, they had drunk water, kneaded bread, eaten meats and fruits from beau-



The goddess of death. (*Museum of the City of Mexico.*)

tiful red vases with broad black spots, which sometimes give to the geometrical ornament the crude appearance of a beast or a bird. They had slept on the prairies under tents of hide decorated with childlike designs of hunted bison, demons, and fearful gods, which, in their violent coloring and their awkward drawing, united the most primitive of symbolisms with the most primitive of writings. In them can be foreseen the hieroglyphs of Mexican manuscripts and of Peruvian bas-reliefs, with their geometrical life and their harsh intricacies like those of a picture puzzle. With their faces hidden under horrible masks decorated with striped feathers, beaks, and horns, their bodies painted in violent colors and covered from head to heel with multicolored plumes which gave them the appearance of those monsters with crested spines that are found in the coal of the Rocky Mountains, they had danced the terrible war dances that center round the idea of death.[1] Perhaps even more distant memories moved within them; perhaps there lay in the depths of their minds some images of the sculptured rocks of prehistoric Scandinavia and through the thousands of years of their traditions they may have preserved, transformed by time and adapted to new climates, the primeval technic of building with wood which their oldest ancestor had brought from the plateau of Iran.[2]

In any event, the ruins which are so abundant in

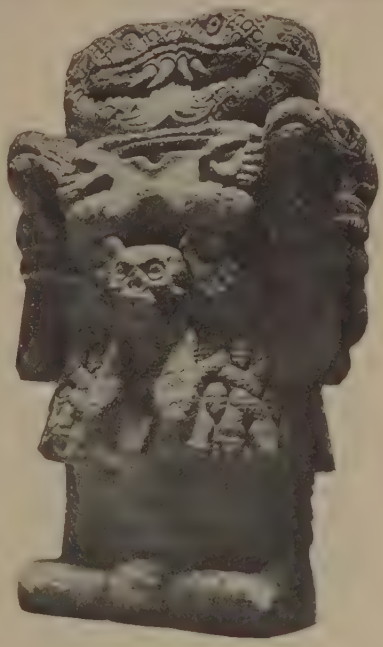
[1] The art of the polar regions and the art of the North American Indians, among the Eskimos, on one hand, and among the natives of Alaska, Vancouver, and the United States, on the other, still continues to-day nearly the same as it has always been. It seems to present the point of relationship with Mexican art—which would be the stylization attained after centuries or thousands of years—that the artistic industries of the African Negroes have to the great art of Egypt.

[2] Viollet-le-Duc, Preface to *Cités et Ruines Américaines*, by Désiré Charnay.

Yucatan all bear the trace of these things. The Maya conquerors, who constructed these edifices, probably before the arrival of the Toltecs and perhaps even at the period of the Greco-Latin civilizations, connect the American branch of the Aryas—through their pyramids built with steps on the outside and their buildings with sloping walls—with the Asiatic and European branches which had spread, in the earliest times of our history, over Mesopotamia, India, Egypt, Greece, and southern Italy. And in all the remainder of Mexico, which, in the Middle Ages, was covered with aqueducts, quays, piers, canals, bridges, reservoirs, stone streets, pyramidal temples, terraced palaces, and ramparts, the genius of the white peoples, more or less mingled, more or less resistant, persists—in great purity at times, as among the Yucatecs, or stifled, oftentimes, by theocratic formulas, as at Mitla, or thickened by black or yellow blood, as we find it when we wander on the plateaus where so many races are crossed, where Nature takes back everything to herself, where the woods so often cover enormous ruins that bear on their summit a temple of the Catholic god.

As in India, when one moves from the south to the north, from the confused intoxication of the sensualist peoples to the clear conceptions of the rationalist peoples, here, when one descends from the north to the south, one passes through every stage, from the façades bursting with complicated sculptures to the great horizontal bands—smooth or hollowed out into abstract ornament—which are supported by colonnades and cut by pure edges, as bare as the profile of the soil. From the calcareous plains of Yucatan to the cool plateaus of upper Mexico the way leads through feverish undergrowth, alive with serpents, scorpions, and poisonous insects—a place where the mind could

have been dulled by the weight of the noxious exhalations, the eye blurred by bloody mists, so that the various styles of building were fused, as the most bizarre fancies of theocratic pride were imposed on the architects. Primitive India, northern Europe, Asia, and America were mingled, even as their mythologies had been mingled, and disfigured, in the fierce soul of the old Mexican prophets. Nothing can express the burning restlessness of the soul of these peoples, who knew astronomy; who had divided the epic of humanity into four sublime ages — the suns of water, air, fire, and earth—which represent the struggle against the deluge, the cold, lava, and hunger; who sang the loves of the volcanoes; who adored the sun, the profound father of life, from the tops of the terraces, but who thought it necessary that the walls of the temples which they raised to him be always bathed in human blood, that it should rot on the burning earth, and that at the summit of the temples a Stone of Hearts should offer



The goddess of death.
(*Museum of the City of Mexico.*)

to the eagles the viscera of the human beings who were sacrificed.[1]

For Teoyaomiqui, goddess of death, for Huitzilopoctli, god of carnage, for Tlaloc, god of water, of forests, of storms, the god who regulated the warm torrents that streamed from the sky for six months, and for Quetzalcoatl, the plumed serpent that was already adored by the Toltecs[2] from whom the masters of Tenochtitlan received art, the cult of the sun, and the thirst for blood for all these gods new cadavers were necessary. To consecrate the temples of Huitzilopoctli at Tenochtitlan, eighty thousand prisoners had their throats cut. The bread offered in sacrifice was kneaded with the blood of children and virgins. Their hearts were torn out and lifted up to the god, the pools of blood that spurted from the severed arteries were carefully spread over the image of the god so that it should disappear under a mantle of smoking clots at the end of the ceremonies. Heaps of severed heads were raised as high as the pyramidal temples. There were sanctuaries where one entered through a mouth whose teeth crushed skulls and tore entrails and which one could not pass without walking in blood up to the knees. The priests flayed men to dress in their skins.

From the depths of this horrible red steam that rose everywhere, which got into one's throat, caused a nauseous poison to roll in the veins, and threw a veil over memory, how could the enervated and discouraged soul of the peoples have drawn the forms that sur-

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[1] I address my warmest thanks to M. Auguste Génin of the City of Mexico for the precious information that he has transmitted to me, when I have not found it in his beautiful *Poëmes Aztèques*. M. Briquet, the photographer at the City of Mexico, is also entitled to my deep gratitude for the zeal and disinterestedness with which he has placed at my disposal a great number of photographic documents.

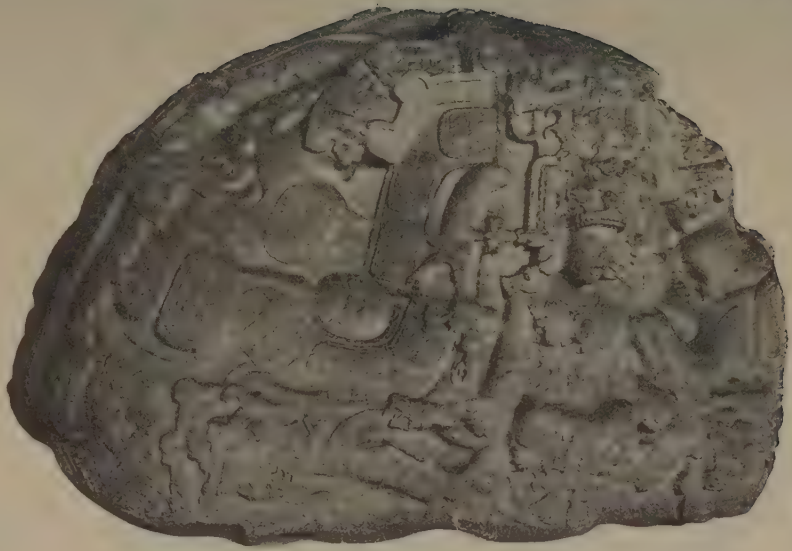
[2] Toltec signifies "artist."

rounded them, the great laws of living structure from which there issued through Egypt and Greece the civilization of the Occident? Everything that was not death was hidden from the eyes of the people. Only when the sun was at its zenith did it touch the sculptured altar in the well that was hidden in the heart of the artificial mountain. The flat bas-reliefs with which the walls were covered and in which one might, under the brilliant varnish of the greens, the turquoise blues, and the reds, have seen men in plumed helmets hunting the tiger and the boa, disappeared under the blood. The vapor of the slaughterhouse masked the idols. The tradition of sculptured material could not be handed on to mutilated generations, and the landscape at which they looked too hastily was always steaming with rain or else vibrating with sunlight. It is by the intuition for mass, and not by intelligence in the use of profile, that one may compare the stone idols which the bronze tools of the Mexicans drew little by little from the block, with the pure Egyptian colossuses whose planes

God of the water.
(*Museum of the City of Mexico.*)

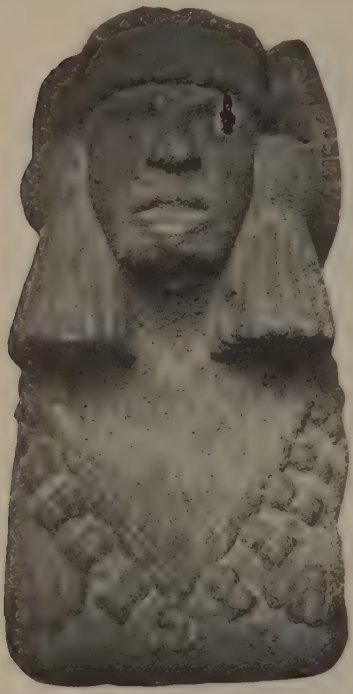
answer one another, introduce one another, and balance, as the land balances the sea.

The Mexicans scarcely reached and certainly could not go beyond the architectural stage in the evolution of the mind. Undoubtedly, the need for an essential symmetry haunts them when they raise Tlaloc on an ornamented pedestal, his hollow eyes turned to heaven, as he sits motionless with his prodigious expression of waiting and boredom, or when they represent Chacmool gathering the rain in his belly, or the goddess of death dressed in serpents and claws and raising her skeleton face and her horrible, rotted hands. In an effort that one feels to have been a painful one, they attempt the most trenchant expression and, to be sure, they do often attain profoundly moving structural epitomes, in a sudden equilibrium that arrests the tottering of the form and, with the energy of despair, sets it firmly in place. The continuity of the composite monster is then no longer, as with the Egyptian, in the progressive and fleeting undulation of modeling that flowed like a clear water. Like a tropical vegetation swollen with spongy bulbs, with spines and blotches and warts, the Mexican sculpture has its own continuity, as it continues sending forth its thick blood, from the torpid depths where the heart beats, to the fat projections—heads and other parts of reptiles, bare skulls, human fingers, and breastbones of birds that, at first view, seem to be caught there by chance. And yet the work does not break down under the load it bears, for it is brought back to organic unity by a summary but imposing architecture that enables it to retain its sense of mass, whatever the depth of the carving, and that is seen in its living ensemble more than in its abstract planes. Only, the frightful destiny of the Mexicans warned them that they would not have the time to arrive at the deepest meaning of the unity in their art,



GUATEMALA. The tortoise of Quiriga. (*Trocadero.*)

to rise into abstraction, to reach the idea of harmony. They say what they have to say hastily, in confused and violent visions, brief and fragmentary; a heavy nightmare of sadness and cruelty.

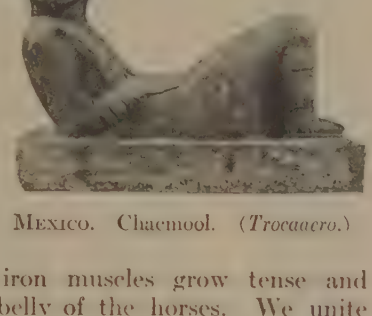


MEXICO. Statue, lava.
(*British Museum.*)

Even when they erect whole statues, when they abandon for a day their hieroglyphical combinations of geometrical figures and animated forms, one would say, from their manner of articulating the limbs and of giving an architectural quality to the masses, that they never saw anything but mutilated trunks, dislocated members, scalped heads, skinned faces with empty eye sockets, and grinning teeth. Life exists in these works only by fits and starts, broken as it is in their soul; it comes in brief tremors, and then is stopped short by dogma and by fear. In confused forms the sculptors combine sections of living animals, enormous pulpy masses swollen with turbid water and bristling with spines like the prickly cactus. In Central America, where the earth is soaked with the water of the hot rains, where the vegetation

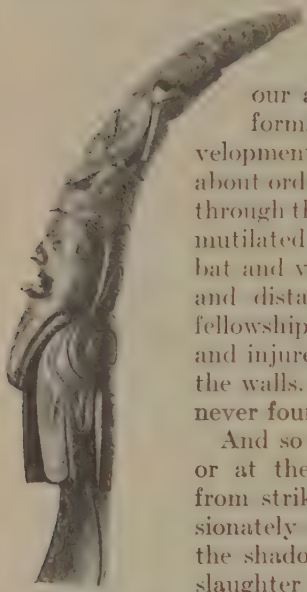
is heavier, the miasmas deadlier, and the poisonous thorn bushes impossible to traverse, the dream is still more horrible. In the sculptured rocks one distinguishes nothing but heaps of crushed and palpitating flesh, quivering masses of entrails, faces from which the skin has been torn—a confused pile of viscera from the sides of which blood seems to run.

By what aberration of art, a thing made to unite mankind, did it occupy itself so exclusively, among these peoples, with the celebration of slaughter and death—as it so frequently did also among the most civilized peoples? Our hearts beat more regularly and more strongly when we follow the Assyrians into their mountains, when they strangle lions whose iron muscles grow tense and whose claws tear the belly of the horses. We unite as if for a prayer around the harmonious groups on the Greek pediments which evoke the terrible myths of Hercules, or the war of gods and man, on the centaurs and the lapiths, or the Amazons works full of murder, of the blows of falling axes and of the flight of spears, where fingers clutch desperately at knives. The lines of soldiers on the arches of triumph of the Romans, the passage of the lictors, of the legionaries, of the somber imperator with his laurels, the plod of the captives, and the sonorous step of the horses fill us with calm and energy. We know on what heaps of cadavers the mosques and the alcazars are raised, with what bloody mortar their stones are ce-



MEXICO. Chacmool. (*Trocadero.*)

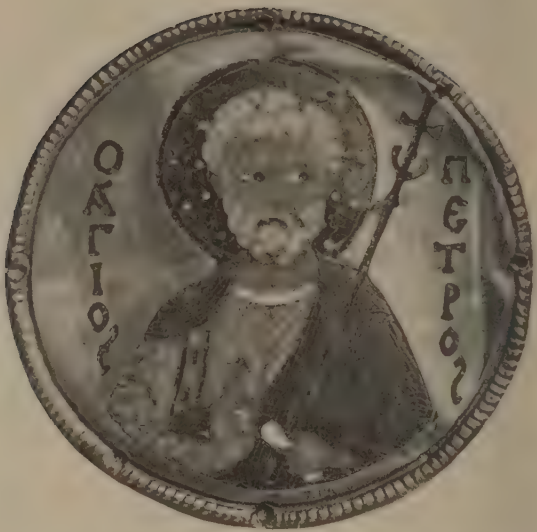
mented, and yet we love the cool of their shadow and their gardens. We even feel a powerful exaltation before the Indian monsters who drink blood and devour rotten flesh. It is because the spectacle of strength exalts our strength. It is also because we deceive ourselves as to the meaning of our acts and because we like the forms that are necessary to the development of our faculty of bringing about order and of comprehending, even through the composite monsters and the mutilated fragments, as, through combat and violence, we pursue an illusory and distant idea of harmony and of fellowship. We fumble in the darkness and injure ourselves as we collide with the walls. The gateway to the light is never found.



ALASKA (XIX Century). Handle of a spoon, slate. (*Museum of Natural History, New York.*)

And so we must look for it together, or at the very least we must refrain from striking down those who are passionately seeking it in the depths of the shadows. In Mexico, in Peru, the slaughter of the peoples was at every moment sweeping away thoughts that were necessary to the development of other thoughts, and so, one by one, the roots of the future were cut as fast as they grew again. If war can at times exalt and even reveal the creative energy of a people, systematic massacre extinguishes all energy. The arrival of the Spaniards in the New World, which brought the most implacable of the European races face to face with the most implacable of the exotic races, was a terrible con-

frontation and one that was providential in history. Spain, to whom the attainment of its unity had given a century of creative velocity, was, because of the Inquisition, to perceive the need that man has for man in order to realize himself. It was not to be long before the moral desert should reach across Spain, as it was beginning to reach across America when that land had made a material desert of itself by burning its cities and by throwing its broken idols into the lake of Tenochtitlan.



A medallion, enamel on gold. A saint. (*In the Svenigorodskoi collection, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.*)

CONSTANTINOPLE

Chapter V. BYZANTIUM

I

BYZANTIUM carried along the world of antiquity to the end of the Middle Ages. As it guarded the gates of the two continents and the two seas, as it was at the center of the eddies of the fallen civilization, it fed its violent and troubled life with the slow death struggles of the ancient peoples. For a thousand years it defended, against the human inundations from the north, the east, and the west, the spirit of law that was Rome, the habits of trade, of politics, and of speculation of the Greeks, and the cruel luxury of the monarchies of the Orient.

The cult of wisdom would doubtless not have felt itself very much at ease under the cupola of Saint Sophia; Athens would not have recognized, in the stiff idols that decorated that church, the freedom of her religious naturalism, nor her respect for the living form in the atrocious mutilations that Byzantine justice inflicted on the condemned. The uncompromising

realism of Assyria would have found no savor in the images of the books of prayer, and the kings of Nineveh would not have comprehended the revolutions fomented in the hippodrome and the changes of government effected in the antechamber or the bedroom where the purple of the Empire was forever dyeing itself with fresh blood. The Rome of the Republic would not have recognized its legionaries in those fat soldiers

ROME. A repast, fresco. (*Catacombs.*)

cuirassed with gold; it would not have tolerated the continual retreating of law before imperial caprice or the intrigues of the eunuchs. However, under the fermentation of the vices, the orgy of the games, the cries of the massacres, and the convulsive autocracy that was obliged to obey the orders of the populace, the law of Rome was here, the opulence of Babylon, the curiosity of Athens and the only focus of light in the dark night round about.

Christianity, which the Greeks of Rome were propagating in the night of the catacombs by means of the image, could not purify or extinguish the light that came from the roaring fire, which was burning away all that remained of the sap of the ancient world in the poisoned fruits. The crowds that had responded to

Rome. Portrait of a deceased person, fresco. (*Catacombs.*)

the appeal of the apostles of Galilee had rendered possible, through the renunciation of their revolutionary instinct, the coming of a social régime harder than its predecessor; and the Byzantine autocrat, in order to assure to himself their support, adopted the letter of

Ravenna (v Century). Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, interior.

the new order and enjoined the priests to change the names of their gods. That was all. The Sophists had misled the philosophic spirit. The Byzantine concilia codified sophism.

The schism of 1054, which separated the Church of the Orient from the Pope, was the consecration of the political schism which had been separating the Orient from the Occident since the division of the Empire. Each half of the ancient world, thenceforward, took its course alone toward transformation and recasting. The mold of Rome is offered to the barbarians at the

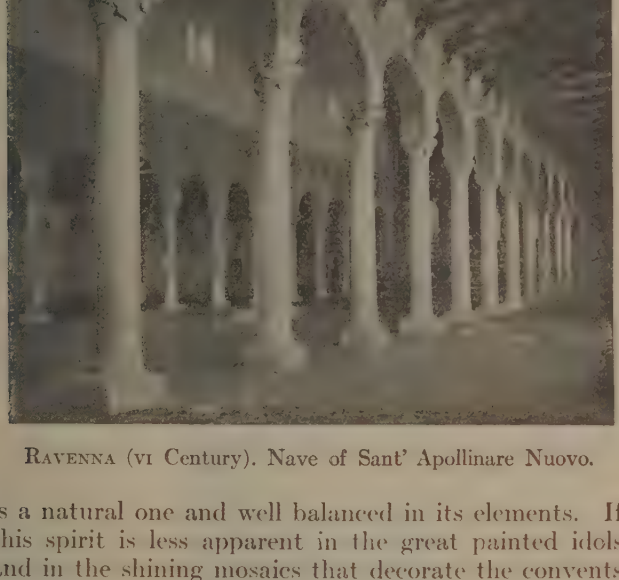
ALMENNO S. SALVATORE, (*Bergamo*) (V and VI Centuries). San Tommaso, interior.

risk of being broken under the pressure of their desires. Hellenism modified by Asia dominates the Orient through Constantinople until the Orient enslaves it through Stamboul. The orthodox icons are to represent the dying Greek idolatry as the Catholic icons, some centuries later, will represent Latin idolatry in its rebirth.

When we open one of those psalters that the Greek monks illuminated in the depths of their cloisters, between the sixth and the tenth century, we soon see it was of the dying idol of Greece that Christianity had asked the consecration of its own life. The whole history of the Jewish people is conveyed in these illuminations and takes on, under the names of the new divinities, the appearances of Greek mythology. David is Heracles when he fights, and Orpheus when he sings. The great goddess, with her beautiful arms, her beautiful face and breast, is always there in the idyllic landscape of the Alexandrian romances. At the time when Byzantium was young, Alexandria was still alive, and the growth of the one and the decline of the other mingle their voices confusedly. Asia, through Sassanian Persia, transmits to Byzantium the spirit of the high plateaus and the land of the rivers. But because of its Greek character, the city is above all sensitive to what the artists of the delta of the Nile have to offer it. They create the image of Hellenized Egypt—that profound portrait in which one looks into the limitless depths of the eyes that have lost their health; and with this revelation the Greco-Egyptian artists teach the decorative industries, mosaics, and painting, such as we see in the garlands of foliage, of fruits, of amours, and of animals that the painters of Pompeii also used to decorate their walls.[1]

[1] For the multiple origins of the art of Byzantium, see the *Manuel d'art byzantin*, by Charles Diehl.

In the illuminations of the manuscripts there is evidently nothing left of the freshness of the world that once went mad with the joy of its self-discovery. But it is the Greek spirit that is here. Man approaches the god with a free attitude; all of life finds its goal in him, as in a center of attraction, and the organization of life



RAVENNA (VI Century). Nave of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo.

is a natural one and well balanced in its elements. If this spirit is less apparent in the great painted idols and in the shining mosaics that decorate the convents and churches from top to bottom, it is because there is less of suppleness in the material, because the surfaces to be covered make severer demands, because a decorative scheme is more necessary, and because the artist is under closer surveillance. Sometimes, upon contact with the soil of Italy, at Ravenna, especially, the images turn into pictures full of movement, and figures pass

among the trees, among the herds, on the sea, or on the shore. Almost always they are stiff, ranged in

RAVENNA (VI Century). Capital. (*Sant' Apollinare Nuovo.*)

parallel lines, and possessing no more of the humanity of the Greeks than that expressed in the timid inclinations they make, one toward another, bending their

heads and necks as if to recall the undulation of the great wave that once flowed over the pediments of the old temples. And yet, the soul of antiquity survives in the great, simple gestures, the silence, the calm glances, the indefinable nobility and majesty that descend from the agony of the past. The soul of antiquity survives through their mere existence, because the people can pray before them, because they have invaded the altar, the chapels, and the reliquaries with the gold and the silver and the ivory from which they are cut and the jewels with which they are incrusted. During a century and a half of imperial ordinances, of ecclesiastical interdicts, of revolts and carnage, when the great sculptures of Asia and Greece lie broken in the sanctuaries everywhere, no menace, no persecution will drive them out entirely. Dogmatic in their immobility, Asiatic in their material, they remain Greek before all else, because they express something which, while it may be transformed, vitiated, bastardized, cannot disappear—the instinct which urges a people to demand from the forms of nature the education of its spirit.

II

They are Greek, also, because, despite their fixed attitudes, despite the barbarous splendor that surrounds them and stiffens them, they radiate a profound sense of harmony. They are the troubled instinct, the living seed of a magnificent flower at the bottom of a plague-ridden pool; their fearful splendor is that of those blue or green flies incased in shining metal that breed on rotting meat. The spirit of Phidias has returned to earth and found its way to the charnel house, where life is blindly asserting itself anew. The whole glorious life that hung suspended in the pediments of the temples, swinging from one horizon to another, seems to

have gathered itself in the depths of these Byzantine images. Even the formation of the heads denotes atrophy; life wells up in the great eyes that look out into space, into the darkness, and into the decomposition and the morbid fever in the soul of the people.

RAVENNA (VI Century) The Magi, mosaic, detail.
(*Sant' Apollinare Nuovo.*)

The inner spirit of the time makes its true appearance as these strange beings look down from their walls and try, in the prodigious fermentation that is taking place in man's consciousness, to reconcentrate the energy scattered piecemeal over all the pathways of the mind by the decadence of Hellas. The Byzantine idols have regained the immobility of the statues which, before the time of Myron and Phidias, characterized the concentration of all Hellenic effort as it prepared its conquest of an imposing and fugitive equilibrium. But

RAVENNA (VI Century). Women bearing offerings, mosaic.
(*Sant' Apollinare Nuovo.*)

the calm of the Dorians and the smile of the Ionians have left them. A dread anxiety dwells in their fixed eyes and around them; instead of the great daylight and the limpid space, there accumulates, in the darkness of the chapels, those magic phosphorescences that steal over heaps of waste and over poisoned waters. The world of Greece, despoiled of the rhythm which had risen so quickly from the depths of its desires to the summit of its will, returns to its origins, to demand of an intoxication, in barbarous harmonies, the meaning of its new presentiments. In the penumbra, inflamed by the heavy glow that falls from the mosaics, one sees but vaguely the motionless processions that carry one - -as across a long forgetfulness—back to Panathenaic friezes, and one would imagine oneself in the heart of a Hindu temple all covered with peacock tails petrified in the light. Never did the heavens or the waters have these blue, concentrated, opaque depths, knowing no other limits than the smoky dream that extends them to the infinite. The reds and the greens had never shone with a more liquid splendor to dye the fields of the earth and the broad mirrors of the sea. Never had fire and gold mingled more harmoniously to give an added glory to darkening suns or to envelop prayer in greater voluptuousness. All the colors of the universe seem reduced to a few essential hues, deepened, intensified, made somber through being piled up in limpid glazes and through crystallizing in space the vague harmonies that float across our minds and harass our desires.

Seen through the reddish mist caused by the incense and the ten thousand lighted candles, the Christ Pantocrator, the Virgin, the apostles, and the saints crowned with gold and dressed in shining robes, seemed far away. High up, the great flattened cupola held the nascent dream within the temple, which the half

cupolas at the angles and the three terminal apses connected with the soil by a series of wavelike steps—as the foothills of a mountain chain lead from the peaks

RAVENNA (VI Century). Interior of San Vitale.

to the plain. In the ancient temple everything combined to associate the meaning of its external form with the line of the mountains and the surrounding horizons; now it had turned inward, and Greek naturalism was brutally accommodated to the taste of

peoples who had been enervated by Oriental life. Whatever the gathered force on the outside of Saint Sophia, whatever the weight of its round domes, it was by the luxury within that it held the crowds and stupefied the travelers to Constantinople who spread afar the glory of the Greek Empire.

Never did material luxury such as this bind popular sentiment to the letter of a religion which claimed to represent pure spirit. The veined marbles, the polychromed mosaics, the great paintings on the vaults and the walls, the pendentives which permitted the heavy circle of the cupola with its constellations to be inscribed exactly in the square of the building, the silver barrier of the sanctuary, the altar of gold, the tribune of gold, the six thousand candlesticks of gold, the swarm of incrusted gems which covered the gold of the tribune and the altar with a stream of sparks, the censers, crosses, enameled statues, reliquaries, tiaras, and diadems, the rigid, embossed robes in which living idols the emperor and the patriarch—were held motionless: the whole was like an enormous sphere of diamond, shot through by flames, a resplendent vision suspended from garlands of light. The promised paradises were realized here below.

And yet when the temple is quite bare, as at Périgueux, for example, or when the mosaics, by their tone, are so incorporated in the edifice that, in the warm and reddish penumbra, one sees nothing but what properly belongs to the thick walls, the sturdy and massive pillars, nothing but curving lines, vaults, arches, and semicircles, a strange sense of harmony comes upon one little by little. The virtue of numbers, that mysterious power that is ever present and active in great architecture, on which all the masters depend for authority, which they always invoke and never formulate—the virtue of numbers is imposed with a

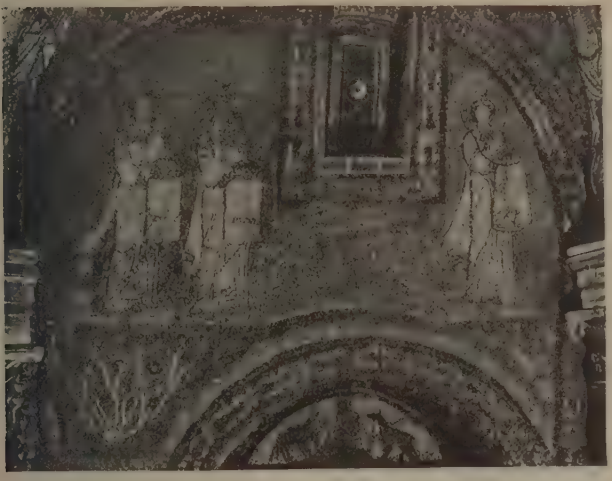
formidable, monotonous, and musical authority. Yes, the flattened cupola prevents the dream from rising, but the dream turns and re-turns upon itself unceasingly, in closed coils, in a moving geometry that reproduces, summarizes, petrifies the gravitation of the heavens. The golden spheres turn in their round. Sophistics, which had taken refuge in the councils, and mathematics, which had been exiled, fuse in a pure flash, to inclose architecture in the obedient orbit of the silent worlds.

III

Here, doubtless, is where we must seek the highest expression of an epoch when barbarous luxury crushed intelligence, when the latter was reduced to shutting itself up in the solitary enjoyment of harmonic mysteries which were transmitted from one to another by the initiated. Outside the circles of the adepts, the art of Byzantium was never fully developed, for it was enchained with gold, rendered motionless by dogma and by bureaucratic regulations which fixed the social and professional life of the corporations and the artists, down to its smallest details. Even so, the rise of Byzantine art to its heavy flight was interrupted for more than a century by the edicts of Leo the Isaurian and of his successors who proscribed images. The cult of the icons triumphed only after a hundred years of proscriptions, killings, and furious vandalism. When the images reappeared, the tradition was shattered, the root of the effort was cut, the artists of Byzantium were dispersed by exile into the near-by Orient, into Italy, and as far as Spain and France. If Byzantine art survived, it was because the illuminators continued their work in the monasteries right through the iconoclastic periods; it was because a renewal of energy followed the effort that Constantinople was to make in

ISTRIA (VI Century). The Visitation. (*Church of Parenzo.*)

throwing back the Slavic invasion and the Mohammedan invasion; above all, it was because, with the Crusaders, a great current of life traversed the country. During the two centuries that this current lasted, it filled Byzantium, Salonika, and Syria with those



Rome (ix Century). Church of Saint Praxed. Mosaic.

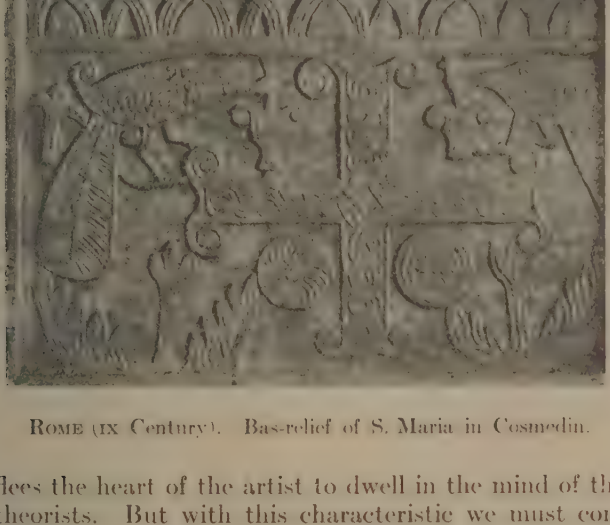
basilicas with the polygonal towers—so poor on the outside, with their flattened, tile-covered domes, with their indigent and dry material, but so rich in their interior, where, from a blue and green darkness, elongated figures look down out of great eyes. This new life installed itself in the cradle of Venice, penetrated to the heart of the Arab caliphates, to Bagdad, to Abyssinia, where it still persists, invaded Christianized Russia to combine there later on with obscure Asiatic influences which the Mongol invasion brought from Persia, from India, and even from China. It is through

this other current that we explain the icons with their gems and gold, and also the golden cupolas, blown up and bulbous, flattened or elongated, spindling or twisted into rhythmic curves. Everywhere in Europe, up to the hour when the French soul—after having concentrated in the springs of its inspiration all the

Rome (ix Century). Bas-relief of S. Maria in Cosmedin.

currents that had come from the Greek, the Hindu, and the Arabian Orient, from the Scandinavians and the Romans—began, in turn, to pour itself over the Occident, everywhere, for three or four hundred years, the stiff arabesque of Byzantium was found—its flat, symbolic animals, its wheels, its crosses with splayed arms and its bas-reliefs that have the appearance of thorn bushes. In the capitals of columns, in the embroideries of metal, of stone, and of wood that cover the balustrades, doors, and caskets, in the enamel

sheathing of reliquaries, sacred vases, and censers, and in the rigid folds of priestly garments, we witness the steady invasion of a monotonous and systematic art of ornamentation. Its character of monotony and system is the evident mark of the persistence of Greek genius – forced by intelligence to formulate a harmony which



Rome (ix Century). Bas-relief of S. Maria in Cosmedin.

flees the heart of the artist to dwell in the mind of the theorists. But with this characteristic we must consider the profusion of the ornament, which is the evident mark of the persistence of the Romanized genius of Asia, compelled by sensuality to express a richness of impression which the mind of the theorists cannot tear from the heart of the artist. The overabundant flavor of Roman decoration fuses, in a stiff and dull, but impressive, ensemble, with the feeling for balance and selection that characterized Greek decoration. The merchants of Byzantium inundated the world with

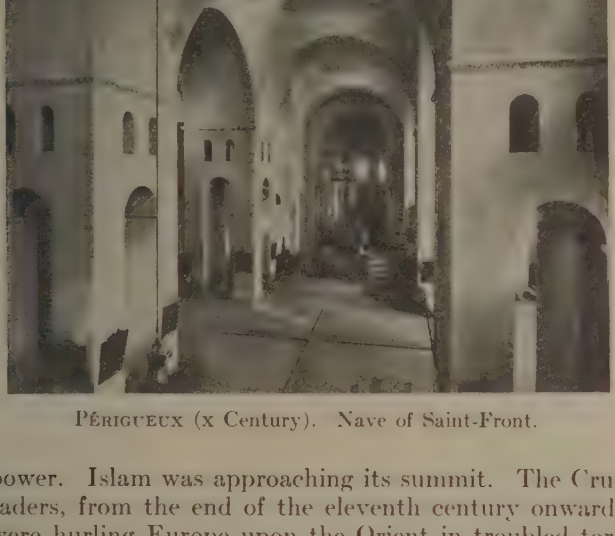
carved ivories, gold objects incrusted with enamels and pearls, cloths of gold, and golden reliquaries set with uncut polished gems. In these objects, which were for use in the church and which were exported in such profusion, we see how the hard patience of the carvers and

Byzantine-Asiatic Art. Sculptured parapet.

the lapidaries succeeded in overcoming the moral passivity of the barbarians. Through the Byzantine artisan a semblance of tradition was kept up everywhere; what was left of the effort of Rome and Athens was communicated unconsciously to the sensibility of the new peoples; an indefinite and floating, but real, transition was established between Europe and Asia, between the spirit of antiquity and the spirit of the Middle Ages.

When man's energy for an ascent is exhausted, when a social and political group becomes the motionless

center of gravitation for a world, it is historically necessary that revolution or invasion renew or destroy that world. All the blood sweated by the Middle Ages and all the gold that was heaped up were suffocating Constantinople. Other centers of light were growing in



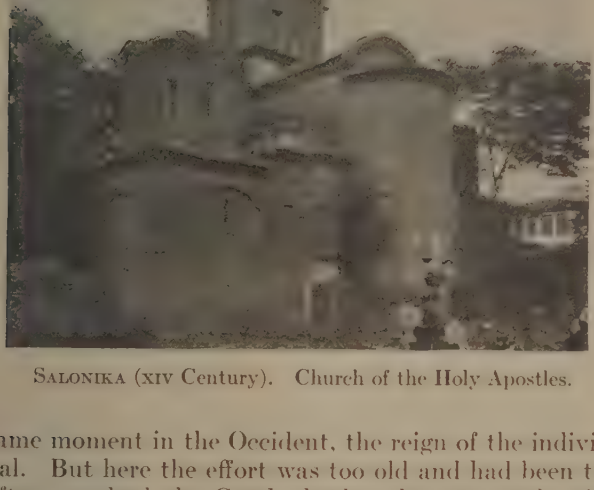
PÉRIGUEUX (x Century). Nave of Saint-Front.

power. Islam was approaching its summit. The Crusaders, from the end of the eleventh century onward, were hurling Europe upon the Orient in troubled torrents. The barbarians of the west fell on the fabulous cities of the east as the barbarian of the north had marched on Rome. A hundred years after they had pillaged Jerusalem, a city of the Infidel, the Franks pillaged Byzantium, a Christian city. Europe breaks down the rampart that protects her from Asia.

There was in the fourteenth century, indeed, after the fall of the Frankish Empire, a last outburst of energy which spread the art of Constantinople over Rumania.

Monreale (Sicily) (xii Century). The Cathedral.

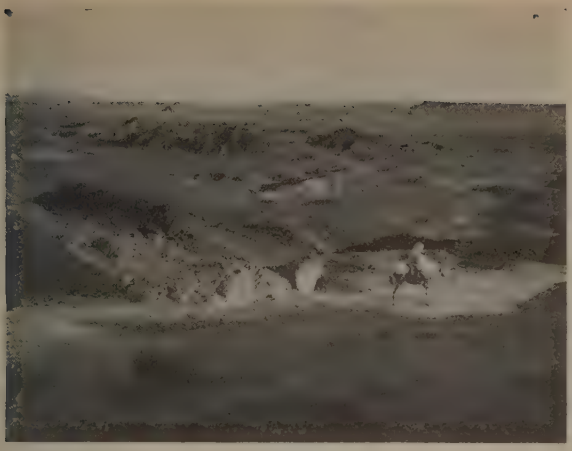
Serbia, and Macedonia. The mosaics became more living, more full of movement; the world moved; Giottesque Italy, after having undergone the influence of Byzantium, affected Byzantium in its turn. Great painting was perhaps to have emerged from the confusion of the primitives and to prepare, as it did at the



Salonika (xiv Century). Church of the Holy Apostles.

same moment in the Occident, the reign of the individual. But here the effort was too old and had been too often repulsed, the Greek rhythm that was prolonging its echo in other countries was giving way under the pressure of Asia, which was overflowing at every point. It was too late. Even if the Turks had not taken Constantinople, men would have seen that the hour had struck. Manuel Panselinos, who, about the beginning of the sixteenth century, is to cover the convents of Mount Athos with frescoes, seems completely, even too completely, Italianized. And about the end of the same century Theotocopuli flees his

Greek island, leaving behind him nothing but the letter of Byzantium and bearing off its spirit alone, in the sumptuous envelopment of Venetian painting He sublimated the opulence of Venice in the flame of a heart that is unique in history, that was capable, by its sole action, of making fertile the stormy and solitary soul of Spain. It was too late. In reality, when Mohammed II planted the standard of the Prophet on the Golden Horn and installed Islam in Saint Sophia, the crisis was ending and no event could have modified the issue. In Palestine, in Egypt, in Sicily, in Tunis, in Spain, in France– everywhere about the Mediterranean, the two mystic currents born of the old Semitic ideal had been clashing for three hundred years, repulsing each other at some points, mingling at others, and revealing to each other, despite themselves and unknown to themselves, the resemblance of all men and the unity of their desire.



THE DESERT

Chapter VI. ISLAM

I

HE two religions confront each other. The drama begins, and we must observe that the ideas which Islam was bringing to the Occidental civilizations and the results of those ideas were more numerous than those which Christianity had, up to that time, offered to the civilizations of the Orient. Islam, which in a savage burst of disinterested faith had launched forth, poor and free, upon the conquest of the earth, having no homeland save its tents and the infinity of a dream which it pursued in the gallop of its horses, in the wind that carried the burnooses and the clouds of dust —Islam, throughout the Middle Ages, was the true champion of the never-attained idea which, the more we seek to grasp it, plunges us only more deeply into the future.

When Justinian had closed the schools of Athens and had driven the artists and scholars from the Empire— at about the period when Gregory the Great burned the Palatine library— it was with the Sassanian King Chosroes that almost all of them took refuge. History has magnificent strokes of chance. The Arabs, masters of Iran, found there the treasures snatched from the shipwreck, and it was these that permitted their scholars to initiate the new Europe into the thought of antiquity. While the shadows were growing thicker over the Occident, the caliphs were opening universities, digging canals, tracing gardens, reviving the study of geometry, geography, and medicine, creating algebra, and covering the conquered lands with caravanseries, mosques, and palaces. Against the black background of the history of those times we see their works as in a dazzling fairy tale, a great heroic story from the *Thousand and One Nights*.

The miracle of the Arabian mind is that it remained itself everywhere and dominated everywhere without, of itself, creating anything. Anarchic, nomadic, and a unit, as little bounded by moral as by material frontiers, it could, through that very fact, adapt its genius to that of the conquered peoples and at the same time persuade the vanquished to allow themselves to be absorbed in the unity of that genius. Coptic in Egypt, Berber in the Moghreb and in Spain, Persian in Persia, Indian in India, Islam allows the converted races— in Egypt, in the Moghreb, in Spain, in Persia, and in India— to express, according to their nature, the new enthusiasm which it knew so well how to communicate to them. Wherever it established itself, it remained master of the people's heart.

When Abu-Bekr proclaimed the holy war after the death of Mohammed, the first conquerors of Syria and Egypt installed their immobile dream in the

Cairo (vii Century). Interior of the mosque of Amru.

Byzantine or Coptic churches which they came upon in their path. The earlier consecration of the edifice did not matter much to them. They were at home everywhere. They covered the mosaics and the frescoes with a coat of paint, hollowed out a mihrab in the wall facing toward Mecca, and lost themselves in ecstasy, their eyes fixed on that spot. When, in Egyptian, Greek, or Roman ruins, they found ancient columns, they assembled them haphazard, often with the capital downward, all mingling like trees in the same living unity. On three sides of the inner court, where the fountain for ablutions brought to the dried-out soil the eternal freshness of the earth, their parallel rows of columns carried ogive arcades which supported the flat roofs common to the hot countries. The outer walls remained as bare as ramparts. Egypt recognized its dream in that of its conquerors.

But enthusiasm creates action and incites to discovery. Three centuries have passed, the era of the conquests has closed. Islam extends, *via* northern Africa, from the plateau of Iran to the Pyrénées. The nomad enjoys his conquered domains, arouses the energies that had grown weary there, and consents to animate with his spirit the plastic genius of the vanquished peoples, who have become fanatics. All the oases that sow the deserts of Africa and Spain transform themselves into white cities, are surrounded with crenelated walls, and behold, springing up rapidly, palaces rich in shade where the emirs come to seek the cool after having crossed the sands. When the horde or the caravan has marched long days in the reddish and moving circle whose edge is never reached, it is no longer the bouquet of palms that it sees when the burning air that vibrates and rises has hung a vision in the sky: it is a pink or bluish haze wherein terraces, rounded needles, and cupolas tremble behind

an imponderable veil. The Moslem soul, even at the hour when it thought it had gained control over itself, never grasped more than a mirage, a cool shadow, spread for an hour between two sheets of flame over which the conquerors passed.

CONSTANTINOPLE. Saint Sophia (532), with Turkish minarets.

When their great drive was ended, when the dream which had always surged like a wave before them found itself stopped by the sea or by barriers of mountains or by the walls of Byzantium or the squadrons of the Franks, it had to find some other escape and, the horizon being closed, it had to move upward. Now it stifles under the Byzantine cupola, it spreads and stretches out under the ceiling of the Egyptians.[1] The heavy semicircular arch of the basilicas has already become the broken arch that launches upward. The spherical cupola will likewise take on ascending lines.

[1] Al. Gayet, *L'Art Arabe*.

It will find again the old Assyrian forms that Sassanian Persia had continued until the times of Islam. The slender ovoid dome carries the eye upward until we get the illusion that the dream of the builders is gliding with its forms and follows its fleeing curve to escape at its summit; the base of the cupola is strangled so that its point of support may be masked and the

Cairo. Tombs of the Mamelukes.

mystery of the suspended infinite be realized. Beginning with the fourteenth century, the columns disappear and the bareness of the great naves evokes the desert, with its circular horizon and the vault of heaven—the only repose for the eyes as they look upward. Outside, above the vertical walls that are as naked as the soil, one sees the cupola rising in purity, accompanied by the flying minarets from which, by the voice of the muezzins, the words from above descend at the hour of prayer.

The mysticism of the nomads had found its resting place. Only the Turk, who mirrored his heavy soul in the dull tones of Persian faïences, retained the Byzantine curve with the flattened cupola, invisible under the clumps of black cypresses from which shoot up the pointed roofs of the cylindrical minarets. It was without knowing it that he inherited the glory of Byzantium; he did not see the torrent of the white, blue, and pink stones streaming to the sea, lighting up in the morning, and dying out at evening, nor the domes of gold which, till the fall of night, retained the flame of the twilight. But, aside from the Turks, the Moslem architects, from Egypt to Spain, attached themselves by instinct to the upward-springing forms of the windows and cupolas, and here their mystic aspiration was not limited, even if, with the changing direction of their genius, they changed the distribution of the domes, the disposition of the naves, or the type of the minarets, which are now round, now square, now octagonal—smooth or damascened. The Egyptian mosques remained as bare as the spirit of the desert; the mosques of the Moghreb and of Spain crossed their arcades of black-and-white arch stones and gave a double rise to their rows of cylindrical columns that are like thickets of palm trees from which droop the long leaves. The great mosque of Cordova, dating from the time of uncompromising faith, is almost a dark forest. In its shadows, made denser by the perspective of the silent shafts, one feels the presence of a terrible infinite that is impossible to seize.

II

The Moghreb artist varied the form of the arcades and gave diversity of aspect as between one hall and another, one alcove and another, in the mosques and

especially in the palaces, the alcazars and the alhambras of Andalusia, where one's enervated fancy wanders from the halls of red and gold, black, emerald, or turquoise blue to the great colonnaded courts, to the paved gardens where the perfume of the lemon trees, the mimosas, and the orange trees weighs on the stifling air, and to the motionless shadows under which basins of marble offer to the yews long mirrors of pure water in which to dip their image. Empty of animate forms, the mind of the Moghreb artist sought restlessly to break the monotony of its plastic visions by combining familiar lines and twisting them in every direction. The semicircular arch drew its points together, curved itself into a horseshoe, was narrowed, foreshortened, splayed, loaded with stalactites, with cells like those of a beehive, and was fretted to a greater or less extent with festoons and lacework. And when the formula was exhausting itself there came the arabesque that bit into the stone, carved into openwork the plaster moldings wherein the stained-glass windows were incased, and invaded the rectangular framework of the arcades. It sent its winding flame even to the inner surfaces—blue, red, white, and gold—of the niches and vaults that offered an escape from the world outside, from the sun and the soil whose torrid uniformity heightened the charm of the multicolored paradises stretching out in the cool shadow and the silence over the perfumed waters and the soft divans.

When linear ornament had attained its full sweep, it invaded the mosque, like the alcazar, from the base of the walls to the top of the cupolas. Disdainful or ignorant of the form of a world that offered little to attract the eye, the Arab had the time to pursue, to combine, to vary, and to multiply his arabesques. In the interlacing rosework, the polygonal ornaments the stylized inscriptions, all the ornamental motifs

issuing together from a vague and subtle imagination, ecstasy, doubt, serenity, and distress were expressed by the obliqueness, the verticality, the waviness, the detours, and the horizontality of the lines. All the ornamental motifs corresponded with the obscure and complex ensemble of man's feelings and were developed

CORDOVA (VIII Century). Interior of the great mosque.

to the point of mingling, superimposing, and juxtaposing themselves in squares, circles, bands, ovals, and fans. They passed without apparent effort like the soul itself—from exaltation to depression, from reverie to logic, from rectangular forms to rounded forms, and from the fantasy of the unrestrained curves to the severities of the geometrical figures. Everything that detached from the walls, the *nimbars*,[1] the banisters, and the gratings, was embroidered with interlacing

[1] In Moorish architecture the term for the niche in the mosque indicating the direction of Mecca.

lines; stone and plaster were perforated, wood was inlaid, plaques of bronze, silver, and gold were carved. . . . An immense system of tapestries and embroideries seems to be spread over the walls, to cover the arcades, to distribute the light from the windows, and some-

CAIRO. Detail of the façade of the Kalaoum Mosque (1284).

times to fall on the cupolas and the graded minarets where the interlacings and the arabesques became more and more complicated. The whole thing became like a hanging fairyland, like cobwebs in the great garden of space, dust, and sunlight.

The arabesque had had its hour of concrete life. Geometric ornament, into which it was to evolve, is never born spontaneously; it realizes, in the brain of

GRANADA (XIII Century). Hall of the Abencerrages in the Alhambra.

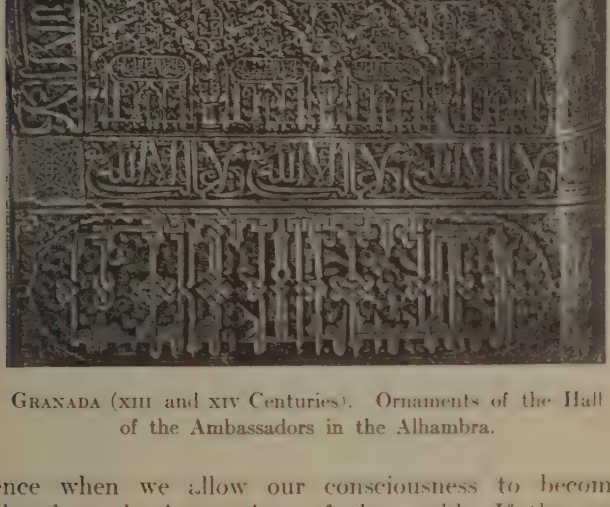
the artists, the final stylization of a motif from nature, just as the mathematical formula is, for the scientist, the form of expression which a truth derived from experience must take, and thereby grow inert. The arabesque was born of the twining together of flowers and leaves, as we first find it around the arcades of the old mosque of Ibn-Touloun at Cairo, when, after the end of the conquest, the imagination of the Arabs was less tense and had the leisure to become complicated and the desire to become subtler. It took on a far rarer quality when the fourteenth century had fixed its law of decoration. And this progressive passage from the living line to the ideographic line, from the ideographic line to the geometric line, sharply defines the spiritual direction of this art. When the regular polygon made its appearance in the *répertoire* of ornament, the Arab geometrists tried to deduce from it general principles which would permit them to extend the system of the polygon to the whole of decoration. Arab art, from that time on, became an exact science[1] and allowed the reverie of the mystic to be inclosed in the hard language of perfectly bare abstraction.

Mosque of the Aljafería, decorative detail. (*Museum of Saragossa.*)

Born of the desert, where there are no forms, where space alone reigns and has neither beginning nor end, Arabian spirituality found its supreme expression in the

[1] A formula drew from the polygon and brought back to it all the geometrical motifs of decoration.

arabesque which also has neither beginning nor end. The eye cannot come to rest on it. It is like those voices of the silence that we hear and follow in their interminable round when we listen only to ourselves, and when our feelings and ideas are enmeshed confusedly in a kind of languid pleasure which we experi-



GRANADA (XIII and XIV Centuries). Ornaments of the Hall of the Ambassadors in the Alhambra.

ence when we allow our consciousness to become closed to the impressions of the world. If the reverie aims to reach some conclusion, if the metaphysical abstraction seeks to clarify itself, it can find no other language—since it has remained outside of life—than the mathematical abstraction which compels the mind to move in an absolute of convention.

It is singular that the most precise of the languages that we employ, the most useful to our modern civilizations, should also be the one which—when we seek dis-

interestedly the pleasure of its abstract creations—should awaken in us only those sentiments that are most lacking in precision and most impossible to seize upon. It is singular that this instrument of pure mind should serve only our most material needs, and that, when used to explore the spiritual world, it should be the most impotent of all in penetrating its mystery. All powerful when we desire to know what motionless matter is, it is of no use whatever as soon as we seek enlightenment regarding living matter in its activity and its evolution. If it is an incomparable weapon for a mind that dominates it, it is dead for a mind that can be dominated by it.

Art, like life itself, is in a constant state of evolution. If scientific certainty is perchance substituted in the soul of the artist for the desire for that certitude which not only torments him but gives him strength, the need for effort is destroyed within him, and enthusiasm weakens because static realization has replaced the constant renewal of desire. When mathematics is introduced into the domain of the artists, it should remain in the hands of the architects as an instrument whose purpose is to define and determine the logic of the edifices they construct. But architecture cannot pretend to do more than adapt a building to its utilitarian function and suggest, by the direction of its lines, the most powerful, but also the vaguest, of the great collective sentiments. It is not the prerogative of mathematics to monopolize form and thereby inclose it within a wall of pure abstraction. When it prevents sculpture from developing and the painted image from being born, it condemns the people which it expresses to remain slaves to the temporary form, which they had given to their idea; it condemns them to die.

What endows it with its greatness endows it also

with its weakness. It is slain by the realization of its purposes. It does not renew itself, since the individual cannot break the definitive formulas in which, by its own will, it had inclosed itself. The mosque and the

GRANADA (XIV Century). Patio de la Alberca in the Alhambra.

Arabian world grow motionless together, exactly at the moment when the Occidental peoples are emerging from the collective rhythms. It is in the hope of a discovery half seen that men gain the power they express in their work, and from this moment on the mosque builders begin to lose courage.

Mosque of the Aljafería, detail. (*Museum of Saragossa.*)

If the desert reveals to men the unity of mind, it is also responsible for the mind's forgetting the few forms that are presented. From the desert came the antisocial and anticivilizing conception of the two irreconcilable worlds of the immaterial soul and the material body. After the death of a people that has failed to discover and to express its accord with the external universe, there remains nothing of that people, however great its courage; the spirit which men follow is that which knows how to animate with its life the forms of that universe. It is the rocks, the water, and the trees which, through the spirit of the Greeks, made the Occident fertile. Every time that history hesitates, we look to the pediments of the temples where men recognize themselves in the gods.

III

The Arab, it is true, never compels the artist to refrain entirely from representing animate life, and sometimes it trembles furtively on the walls of the palaces and mosques of Spain and Morocco. Like all the monotheistic peoples who have been modeled by the desert, he was only obeying his instinctive repugnance for everything that is living form. Religion represses instinct only during periods of decadence. During periods of strength, instinct sweeps religion along with it in whatever direction it chooses. In Egypt or in Syria, Mohammedan art had the nakedness, the sadness, and the grandeur of the desert. In the depths of the cool grottoes of the Moghreb and of Spain, where the caliphs came to listen to the pholosophers and to breathe the odor of the lemon trees after their cavalry had reaped its harvest, Mohammedan art seemed to work with blocks of gold ground in clotted blood. In India, it allowed the whole flood of

the world of matter to invade the mosque. On the plateaus of Iran it was like a field of flowers.

Persia no more resembles the sandy plains of the eastern Mediterranean than it does the Andalusian or

Cairo (xvii Century). Interior of the Bordeini Mosque.

Moroccan valleys, which are forever contested by hard shadow and by fire. To the west, in the upper regions which border the central desert, high above the dust, three thousand meters above sea level, and thus so much nearer the stars, the air has the transparence,

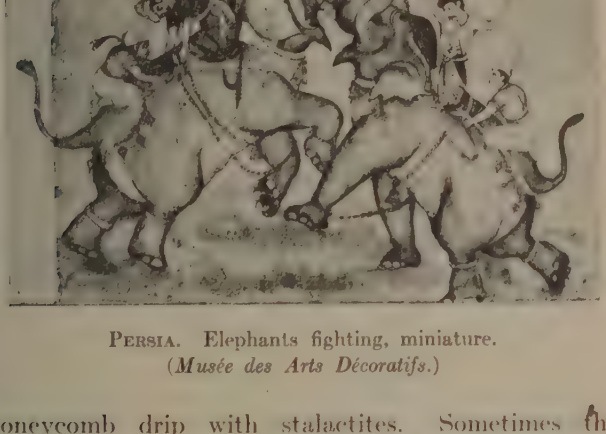
PERSIA. Young men making a sacrifice, miniature.
(*Private Collection.*)

the limpidity of glass. In the breath of the wind the white meadows and the pink meadows there are mottled like watered silk, and from spring to autumn the broad strips of poppies and the fields of grain run the gamut of all the uncertain color tones, from tender green to golden yellow. The skies, where the pigeons fly, and the clouds have those delicate tints that one can observe in the earliest blossoming of trees. The cities are deluged with roses.[1]

When one approaches them their assemblies of domes, ovoid, swelling, or twisted, and their long, straight minarets that emerge from the groves of cypresses and plane trees, seem like memories already blurred by uncertainty. In turquoise blues, burnt-out pinks, pale greens, and dulled yellows the mirage has taken on the appearance of an aërial water color painted with vapor on the fleeing horizon that is known to artists who have followed the path of the caravans from oasis to oasis. Near-by one sees crumbling walls, cracking cupolas, minarets whose decoration of interlacing black and white is scaling off. It is ruins that are before us. But they are the ruins of a recent period. The enamel that clothes them, the old Chaldean enamel that ancient Persia had made known to China and that China brought back to Iran by the Tartar hordes—the enamel has kept its glassy brilliancy under the coating of silicate that covers the brick. Violets, blues, and browns, ivory whites, lilacs, yellows, and greens, shine in these enamels, pure or in combinations that make rosebushes and anemone or iris flowers over white inscriptions and arabesques of gold. The pulpy flesh and the pearly surface of the flowers marry and swell the living garlands that here replace the abstract arabesque in which the inventive faculty of the Arabs

[1] Pierre Loti, *Vers Ispahan*.

found its expression. Under the high ogive of the doors framed with a crust of enamel, the dim glow of turquoises, amethysts, and lapis lazuli makes a creeping phosphorescence; under the inner crown of the domes whose rounded softness knows nothing of the mystic impulse of the desert, the ornaments shaped like



PERSIA. Elephants fighting, miniature.
(*Musée des Arts Décoratifs.*)

honeycomb drip with stalactites. Sometimes the interior of the cupolas sends forth flashes from plates of glass combined with prisms.

It was in an ancient and forgotten period that the people spread on the walls the Persian carpets resembling dark, plowed earth into which crushed flowers have been pressed. In their place shone enameled brick when, at the end of the sixteenth century, the great Abbas suddenly caused the monumental fairy-land of Ispahan to be built. The Persian school of painting which was born at that moment had only to listen to the counsels of the men who gave the wealth of decoration to the enameled mosques in order to

reach, through Djahangir, through Mani, and through Behzade especially, the highest living expression that Mussulman art has known. The whole industry of the potter, everywhere most ancient and most durable, brought its necessary contribution to this art also. The Persian pot is already painting crystallized in fire. Its decoration, which is not very rich in images, is doubtless the richest of all in its ever new stylization of the summits of sensation. Nothing remains of the world of the senses save what is profoundest in color, what is most immaterial in the object, most fleeting in the form. Neither the sky nor the sea nor the flowers are painted there, but beds of flowers break through with their freshest corollas, great stretches of sky with their pearliest billows of cloud, and the immensity of the seas with their shining surface. In spots, in creeping lines, in drops, in clusters, and in mottlings, the most elaborate and elusive principles of the flowers, the sky, and the sea are evoked according to the changes in the harmonies with which they fill the memory. The rare painting of Persia arrests this fugitive splendor in every form depicted. The school flowers suddenly, to fade quickly, and to die in two centuries because it had given out too much perfume and brilliancy. It was like an enchanted dream in which for an hour there were blended the passionate sensuality of India, the mannerism of the Persians, the slow science of the Chinese, and the great fairy dream world of the Arabs.

Rolling its treasure from the deserts of Arabia to the happy islands of Japan, and from the Moghreb to India, Persian painting is like a deep ocean made up of all the ingenuous desires of the flesh, all the frankness of its intoxications, all the puerilities, the smiles, the wild and touching fancies of the primitive peoples suddenly carried beyond the rosy gates of the paradise

BEHZADE (Persia). Man painting.
(*From Les Miniatures Persanes.*)

of art! . . . It was an Eden where tigers trod on meadows full of flowers, where men and women in robes of silk—green, red, or blue—men and women with delicate noses, little mouths, very long black eyes, and oval faces, were seated in a circle on beautiful embroidered carpets. Trees in bloom rose against backgrounds all of gold. For the Persian there could never be enough flowers: there are flowers on those lawns of almost black green which make one feel that living water is near; there are flowers among all the leaves, flowers on the carpets, flowers everywhere, enormous flowers whose trace is to be found even on the little cups of coral and of porcelain from which the ladies and gentlemen with golden spoons dip the candied flowers. In landscapes of red, green, or gold, whose natural symphonies take on the quality of a deep and precious velvet, nervous, delicate black horses with curving necks pass at a gallop, each bearing a proud rider, a falcon on his wrist, a brilliant aigrette on his turban. Multicolored birds fly in the trees—they are genii who talk with men, far better than those golden birds with topaz eyes which flew and beat their wings about the throne of the Byzantine autocrat. Magical palaces open their gates of light and their porticos of lace; their enameled or damascened walls are embroidered with gems; their ceilings are of crystal; silent carpets lead to thrones of gold where golden peacocks spread tails of emerald; there are gardens with vases of porphyry and jets of water where the sun lights up opals, graded white terraces, and cupolas, pink, azure, or milky. Even in the depths of the night they gleam like the snow at dawn. When evening came, one listened to musicians on the blue waters, one breathed the odor of the fruits that gleam in the black heart of the trees. The djinns descended among men with baskets of rubies and baskets of topazes, and the

rising moon was like a pearl fallen from the necklace of stars that encircles the sky. . . . All this is painted with subtle strokes, with brilliant tones that die out in their harmonies, with the tremulous purity of the

PERSIA (XVI Century). The Hunt, miniature.
(*Bibliothèque Nationale.*)

shadows, and with the unchanging light of the day. Here are all the Thousand and One Nights dreamed of by the old story-tellers who, from evening to morning, talked inexhaustibly to the gay travelers seated in a circle under the tent.

Here are strange races, veritable masses of contrasts; and the deeper they plunge into the desert, the farther they live from the cities, the heavier the sun that beats

upon them, the more marked and surprising these contrasts become. Here are men who wear robes of green and red silk under burnooses of white wool, and who cover the harness of their horses with gold. They forge weapons and incrust them with gems; they keep their water pure in damascened copper. They know only silence and melancholy contemplation, or else frenzied laughter and uproar. They forget their natural sobriety to enter suddenly on a round of incredible feasting. They despise death, they despise life. Among them a state of ecstasy follows hard upon crises of unbridled sensuality. Their paradise of abstractions is peopled with women. Their terrible fanaticism is unequaled by anything but their terrible inertia: the flight of time is nothing for them, and they let their temples crumble with an indifference as marked as the ardor which they expended in building them.

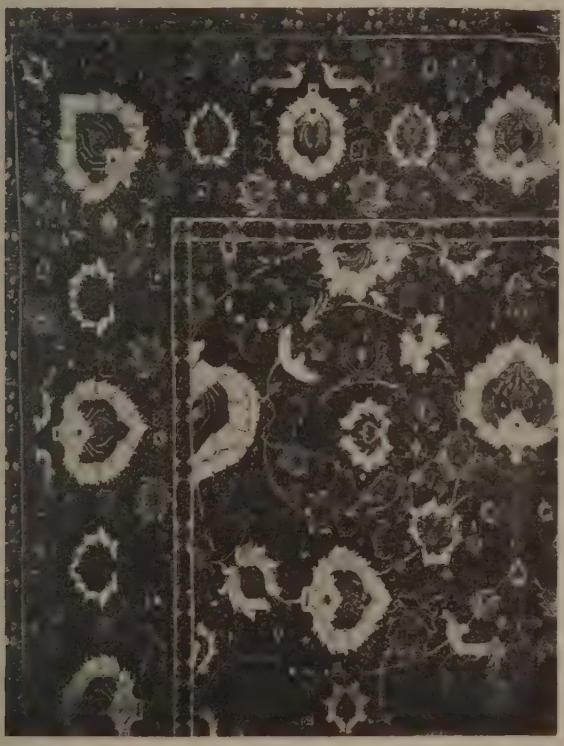
The excessive climate, the great contrasts of nature, and the life of the nomad have created this ignorance of —or this disdain for— the balance of soul that we love. The oasis is too cool after the sands, the water is so sweet to the burnt lips, the cities offer to the wanderers such hot pleasures and such gold! The rich man shall have a hundred wives and the poor man shall have none, and so there is a gap that can never be filled between the metaphysical absolutes and the worst bestiality. But the races of the Occident fill this gap by exploring all the roads that must be traveled in order to rise from and by means of sensual life to the threshold of the heroic life. With these races of the Occident we must number some of the Oriental races which belong to the same ethnic groups as the European peoples. It was, doubtless for this reason, that the Persians—whose mind was less spacious, perhaps, but certainly more curious than that of the Semites—

TURKISH (?) ART. The Repast.
(*From Les Miniatures Persanes.*)

never swerved from their historic role, which is to carry on forever into the future a little of the immemorial civilizations of the country of the rivers. It was for this reason again that in Persian art there was no break in continuity between Sassanian Persia and Mussulman Persia, and that the carpets and the vases continued to be made in the same workshops. Because of their racial quality, also, the Persians recovered from the Tartar invasions and outlived the Arabs in their period of greatness by three centuries. It was for the same reason, also, that the idol worshipers of Byzantium will one day be justified by the moral history of the world, as they triumphed, ten centuries ago, in their struggle with those who were opposed to the idols. A resolutely spiritual religion must, doubtless, do without images, even at the risk of declining, at the risk of dying; but what we need to know is whether it is better for us to cultivate pure spirit or the images. It is a weak defense of the iconoclastic emperors to show them as encouraging art whenever it was separate from religion. Art is one; its growth increases with the growth of a living faith, regardless of the way in which it is clothed or labeled or of the role in which men try to arrest it; and if religion dies of freedom, art lives only through its introducing into the world a little more freedom each time it manifests itself. To forbid art to drink at any one source is to dry up all the sources at once.

If idolatry did not save Byzantium, it was because Byzantium was not a beginning, but an end, a rotten fruit of the Greek tree. But it was idolatry which made Egypt and Greece and India, which unchained the great Gothic revolution and the Italian and Flemish Renaissance, and which, later, at the threshold of our own time, aroused sensualism, transformism, and the admirable, vital investigation of the whole last cen-

tury in Europe. All durable civilizations are born of idolatry, obliged, as they have been, to demand that



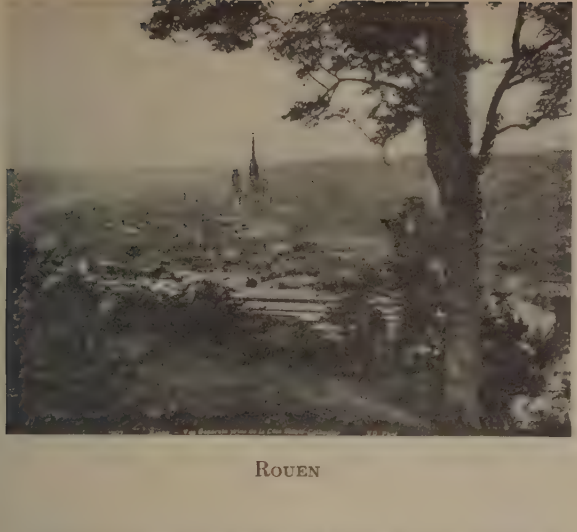
PERSIA (XVI Century). Carpet, fragment.

external nature surrender to them the inexhaustible treasure of her teachings in order that they may give reality to the images that are within them. We cannot demand that humanity live in the desert forever,

when we see that even the peoples of the desert seek the oases.

We may not believe that among idolatrous peoples the superior minds have freed themselves from idolatry: they have freed themselves by it. It is they who, by it, by the living relationships that it revealed to them, have introduced reason into the world, not as an end in itself, but as an incomparable instrument for analysis and for the liberation of the individual. The peoples who recognize nothing but the spirit are the only ones who have never been able to detach themselves from the metaphysical idols which the blankness of the desert imposes on their meditations, because they have been powerless to seize upon their thought and confront it with life.

Moreover, far from arresting the dream, the image offers it a point of support, which enables it to keep within the limits of human reality, and at the same time the dream is broadened because the relationships which the image reveals to it cause other relationships to be suspected, other images to be desired; and so men draw from realization—always a dead thing—the ever-living hypothesis. Idolatry leads to experience and through it to action. When we have lost our equilibrium, it is to the idols that we turn to invoke them to teach us form and life once more. Science is the aspect that our eternal idol worship wears at the present time. Idolatry saves the world when nothing but a little invisible dust is left of the great unbalanced dreams which have been lived by the prophet-peoples fashioned by the desert.



ROUEN

Chapter VII. CHRISTIANITY AND THE COMMUNE

I

THE Semitic spirit, at the decline of the old world, tried to conquer Europe through the apostles of Christ, as it was to take possession of western Asia and of Africa through the knights of Islam. But through the desert, the bare sky, and life without movement the religion of Mohammed remained near to its sources. It could easily retain its original form and spiritualize everything, even to its

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.— The following lines from the *Encyclopædia Britannica* will explain M. Faure's preference for the words "ogive" and "ogival" as against the more common but less precise word "Gothic," in speaking of the architecture dealt with in this chapter and the next.

"A very great step in advance was made by the invention or application of diagonal ribs under the intersection of the plain groined vault. This

expression in plastics. Europe offered to the Jewish idea an outline less suited to it The contact with the cultivated land, with the woods, with the running waters, with the clouds, and with mobile and living form, was to impose on the religion of Saint Paul a sensuous and concrete form which turned the idea from its original direction, little by little, and was to bring the peoples of the Occident back to the course of their natural destiny.

It is true that the impress had been made. The Jewish apostolate, through the power for penetration which it derived from its disinterested faith, carried with it a disappointing dualism, but at the same time it peopled the inner solitude of the masses who had been forgotten by the civilizations of the past. Its pitiless insistence on justice fortified the social instinct in them. And it is thanks to this that the Greek spirit and the Semitic spirit slowly brought about in the crucible of the Occident an accord of which Æschylus had the presentiment and for which Jesus had the desire.

Had Christianity remained as Saint Paul desired it and as the fathers of the Church defined it, it must needs have turned its back upon the plastic interpretations of the ideas which it introduced. But as it wished to live, it obeyed the law which compels us to give to our emotions the form of the things that we see. In Rome, while it was groping in the shadow, trying to tear its doctrine from the confused mass of

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association of strengthening ribs in a cross form to each bay of the structure forms the *ogive*, the characteristic form from which the alternative name of Gothic, 'ogival,' has been derived. . . . The word 'Gothic' was applied by Italian writers of the Renaissance to buildings later than Roman. What we now call 'Gothic' the same writers called 'Modern.' Later the word came to mean the art which filled the whole interval between the Roman period and the Renaissance, and then, last of all, when the Byzantine and Romanesque forms were defined, Gothic became the art which intervened between the Romanesque era and the Renaissance."

he old myths, graven and painted figures were ap-earing, from the first century onward, upon the walls f the Catacombs. They announced new gods, to be ure, but their form remained pagan, even Greek, most ften, for it was the Oriental slave who propagated he religion of Galilee in Rome. Grown clumsy in

CAHORS (XI Century). The cathedral, detail.

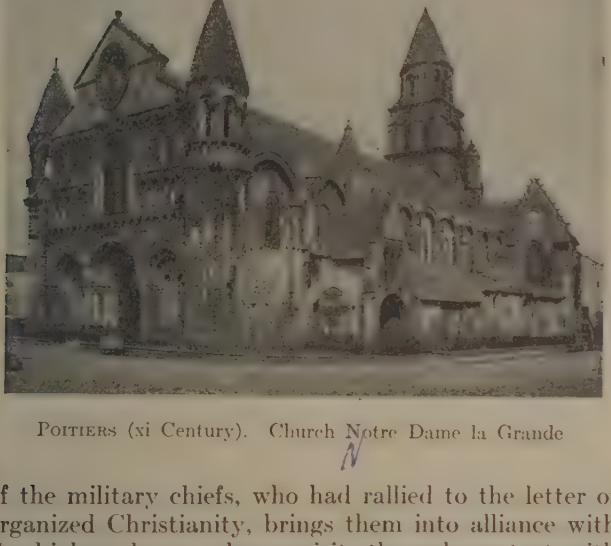
the hands of the poor people, the art which, above the street level, builds thermæ and amphitheaters, which covers villas with frescoes and gardens with statues, hesitates in the darkness underground. The soul of the people will not be silent until the day when official Christianity emerges from beneath the soil to take possession of the Roman basilicas and decorate them with pompous emblems. It will require ten centuries of seclusion before it finds its real expression and compels the upper classes to return to the deeper life and to embrace the hope which has been set free.

The organization of the new theocracy, the repeated invasions of the barbarians, hunger, torpor, and the frightful misery of the world between the fall of the

AUTUN (XI Century). Capital from the nave of the cathedral.

Empire and the time of the Crusades, did not permit any people of western Europe to take root in its soil. In return, although every human tide carried away the new cities built on the newly made ruins, the tribes

descending from the north succumbed, little by little, to the domination of the moral unity inherent in the Christian idea for which the trappings of the ancient civilizations offered an imposing framework. Over the heads of the peoples in their unhappiness, the instinct



Poitiers (xi Century). Church Notre Dame la Grande

of the military chiefs, who had rallied to the letter of organized Christianity, brings them into alliance with the higher clergy, whose spirit, through contact with the warrior class, becomes more and more harsh. When Gregory the Great, some years after Justinian, ordered the destruction of what remained of the old libraries and of the temple of the ancient gods, he consecrated the accord of Rome with the barbarians. The soul of antiquity was dead, indeed. The monarchies of the Orient gather up its last echoes, the monasteries stir up its dust.

The religious communities had remained, up to the Crusades, the only isles of light in darkened Europe. The cloistered luxury of a chosen few, a hothouse civilization, was the representative of sixty centuries of effort, of sensibility, of living realizations. Thebes, Memphis, Babylon, Athens, Rome, and Alexandria

Moissac (XII Century). Abacus of a capital of the cloister.

were contained within the four walls of a monastery, in old manuscripts thumbed by the hard men who opposed the necessary counterpoise of the Rule, to the frightful impulses of a world that had fallen back to the primitive state. But it was around these walls, in these out-of-the-way valleys, away from the great highways which saw the massacres that, here and there, the people of the countryside were assembling to shape the future. The north of Gaul during the Merovingian period had no other centers of activity in the chaos of manners, races, and languages that hov-

ELNE (Pyrenées-Orientales) (XII Century). Belfry of the church.

ered over this agony of the burning cities and the ruined harvests.

In the south, on the contrary, tradition was still profoundly alive. The aqueducts, the arenas, the thermæ, and the temples were still erect in the landscape that is silvered by the forests of olive trees. The amphitheaters still opened their pure curve to the light. The sculptured sarcophagi were in their accustomed place, bordering the roads shaded by the plane trees that are whitened by winter when it despoils them of their leaves and that remain white under the dust of summer. On this burnt earth of southern France, which outlines itself against the sky with the sure lines that one finds again beside the bays of Greece, Gallo-Roman art united quite naturally the positivism of Rome, Hellenic elegance, and the fresh vitality of the Gauls. It declined but little, if at all, upon the passage of the Arabs, who were adopted by this burning soil. Nothing could arrest its fever. Under its violent sun, the blood of nomadic Asia mingled with that of Greco-Latin Gaul. It was a strange, cruel, perverse world, but one of intense, irrepressible life; its ideal was one of equality and it was freer and more extensive than the remainder of France when the division of the empire of Charlemagne had separated it from the north, which was beginning to discuss its problem of Frankish or Norman domination.

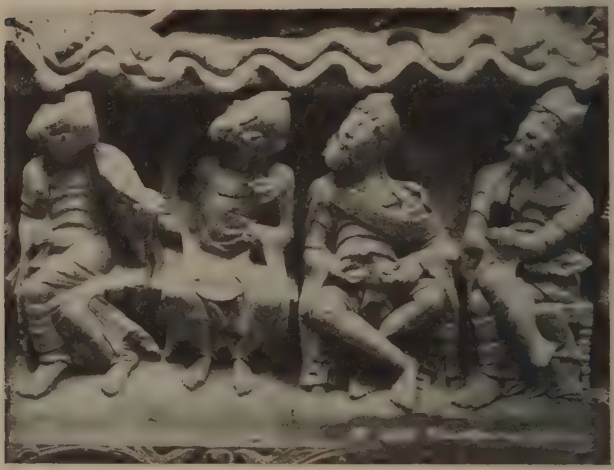
When an orgy of love and blood craves the excitement that results from the nervous tension of the higher culture, when morbid sensuality and exasperated intelligence arise from the same ground, the lightning that flashes from their meeting sets fires burning, and their flame leaps high into the air, fed by all the winds that blow, by the dust they bring, and by the debris of green wood and dead wood alike which they hurl into the blaze together. A hybrid

and convulsive art emerges from the earth, a trifle frail, but so glowing in its intensity that its onrush leaves a groove that cannot be effaced. The trail of fire passed over Provence, surrounded Toulouse, and ascended to the plateau of central France. The antique columns were set up again round the nervous and clumsy bas-reliefs that were painfully inscribed within the rigid curve of the portals. Byzantium and Islam deposited their ferment and their spark in the heart of the material that still retained its memory of the Romans; and the Crusades brought back to the stones, stirring in their new animation, a disordered tribute of memories of Greece and the Syrian world, and, with these, the more distant echo of Persia and India. When the Clunisians set to work upon the stones, about the eleventh century, and erected them according to Norman and Scandinavian ideas, which we see also in the heavy jewels that bear the trace of the oldest traditions of Asia, the great Romanesque style crystallized suddenly, to become, in the hands of the monks, the purest architectural expression of organized Christianity.

II

The church built on the plan of a cross evolved from the old basilicas; stiff and thick-set, it has to make an effort to lift up toward heaven its two burly towers, vibrating with their bells, but unshaken by the wind. If the heavy arch that weighed on the central nave did not crush down its supports, it was because the other naves were loaded with lengthwise vaults supported by enormous walls which suppressed the empty spaces where the openings for windows would have been. The farther the nave was extended, the thicker the walls became, and the deeper became the darkness in the sanctuary, daubed with red and with blue. The

short painted pillars there, with their capitals cut into by crude forms, seemed to bear the formidable weight of a sky filled with eyes that judge and with gates that close on paradises seen but for a brief moment. The edifice was like a crouching monster whose over-heavy



Moissac (XII Century). Detail from the western door.

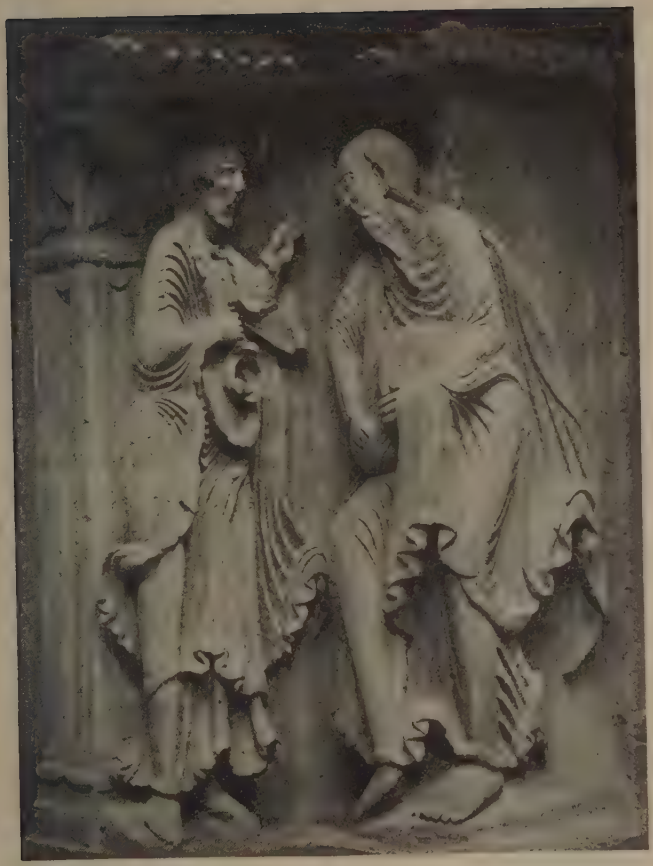
spine bore down on its thick paws. In the center of the silent cloisters, which cut out a square of shade in the light of the south, the soil might crack with drought, but there was cold under the vaults. From these gathered forms, from these clear-cut façades, where the firm semicircle of the arch opened between massive columns, there radiated a naked strength which affirmed the elegance—austere, brutal, and categorical—of a caste in possession of undisputed power. It is the exact image of a fixed Catholicism—the authority of the Councils seated on rock. No outlook on life is

Saint-Amand de Coly (Dordogne) (xii Century).
Interior of the transept of the church.

afforded—the soul alone has the right to life, on condition that it never breaks through the continuous circle of stone in which it is held by dogma. Rome has cemented the thought of Saint Paul in the material of the churches.

Souillac (xii Century). A pillar of the church.

When the uncompromising morality of this rigid world, clad in rough cloth and iron, was ready to quit the pages of the manuscripts and the pulpit of the temples and to show its symbolized face to the multitude, when the four animals of the Evangelists consented to have grow up beside them a new world of animate forms that descended the length of the columns and escaped to the very tympanums of the doors and invaded their lintels, Saint Bernard was the only one who perceived that an era was about to end. The monks could no longer close their eyes, when once the day had touched them with its light. Once life had begun to penetrate dogma, there could be no question as to the final result, even if a few centuries were still needed before life should be released by the compact and closed mass of doctrinary Christianity. In vain it opened its hell, sent stiff, devouring monsters to crawl upon the stones, unchained horrible battles between the absolute virtues and the irreducible vices, divided the world into definitive truths and definitive errors: life, poor and bruised, but regaining its mastery little by little, was introducing its subtle



VÉZELAY (XII Century). Figures in the tympanum of the church.

connecting passages between each of these pairs of moral entities in order to animate them and to unite them.

It was clearly impossible that in this universe which had been closed for ten centuries, the monk sculptor of the Romanesque churches, the theologian armed with a chisel, should discover any more, at first, than a meager type of nature—emaciated, compressed, and suffering, like himself. Long figures, which make a tragic effort to break the mold of the Byzantine, were flattened against the new façades, mechanically expressing an arrested symbolism. The only men, precisely, who reserved the right, at that moment, to express form and life were the heirs and guardians of a theology that had not ceased for a thousand years to look upon and to condemn form and life as contemptible appearances. For the same length of time, the people had been crushed between the material invasion of the barbarians and the moral invasion of Christianity. It had resigned itself, in the promised hope of a future life, to the hazards of its actual life, and, when it fled the devastations of its countryside, it found no other refuge than its feeling for the supernatural.

But despite everything, and contrary to the life and the ideal which they had accepted, the artist-monks were expressing, in those primitive sculptures that were invading the porches of the churches in ever denser crowds, the first sudden perturbations of the needs of their time. A singular force was mounting very rapidly within these works. In close-growing vegetation made up of these rough forms, there circulated something of the sap and the energy which, in the same centuries, were lifting up the wrought stone of the Dravidian pyramids and the Cambodian temples. A dull rhythm, a heavy and vigorous rhythm—like that with which the flood of the springtime carries

its wealth of buds up out of the soil—runs through these rude figures, these heads, and bodies that are hardly more than squared off, and which are elevated in a single movement. A puissant grace, a candid and robust charm hesitate in the stone itself. Clear-cut planes define the elementary movements that incline one face toward another face and cause one hand to reach out toward another. They seem to obey the silent music which groups numbers into constructions and into figures, according to the summary but essential appearance that reveals them to us when our minds are strongly aroused. It is a rough expression but a fervent one that results from this dramatic meeting of Christian symbolism at its highest tension and popular realism in the innocence of its dawn. The breast of the world was dilating slowly, but with an irresistible effort that was to burst its armor. There had been no invasion for a century or two. Born of war and living by it, the feudal lord carries war to the surrounding countries. Gaul, to which the military chiefs had been leading their hordes for so many years, became the central hearth for the fire of expansion and conquest. About the closing years of the eleventh century, the one during which the Romanesque church allowed its compressed life to burst its shell, the Norman barons

CHARTRES (XII Century). A saint. (*Cathedral.*)

passed into Sicily and into England, and the first Crusade hurled the French barons upon the Holy Land. Feudal brutality emigrated for two hundred years.

III

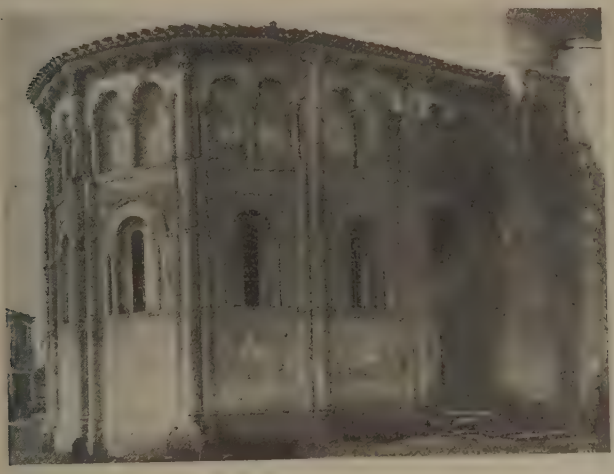
Then the native soil, that which the peoples knew no longer, their roots having been torn from it in every generation by some human tempest—the native soil

CHARTRES (XII Century). Angel. (*Cathedral.*)

rose to the heart of its races. At the same time, the profound movement which cast the mystic and miserable Occident upon the rich Orient, sent flowing back upon the Occident the life of wonderful lands, of other faiths, of other legends, of other customs, and the powerful, confused sensation of a material world and a

world of the soul broadening while changing in appearances, and of a universe that would not be contained within the limits of revealed religion.

The earth quivers with pride. Almost at the same hour, appear the Republic of Florence and the Uni-



Begadam (Gironde) (xii Century). Apse of the church.

versities of Palermo, of Bologna, of Paris. In the very bosom of the Church there are born spirits more religious than the Church, and they subject dogma to a courageous examination. Abelard, the Christian, denies original sin, contests the divinity of Jesus, exalts once more the dignity of the senses, and tries to establish—from antiquity to the Middle Ages, by the impartial study of ancient philosophy and of the doctrine of the fathers—the unity of the human spirit. Four years after his death, his disciple Arnaldo da Brescia proclaims the Republic in Rome. Such a life animates

men's hearts, which Catholicism, carried along with it, discusses, interprets, criticizes—and the dead letter recoils before the living spirit. For the first and the last time in its history, Catholicism follows that profound movement which, from time to time, reveals to a privileged people the conquests it has made during its silence. At the hour when it looks into itself to observe the rising flood of life, it does not perceive what is happening in the strongest cities of northern France. Sometimes supported by the monarchy that feels them to be a bulwark against the lords, Le Mans first, and Cambrai, then Noyon, Laon, Sens, Amiens, Soissons, Rheims, and Beauvais transform themselves into free communes by the refusal to pay taxes, by proscriptions, and by insurrection, sword in hand. Those were the days when the cadavers of bishops were dragged through the streets.

It matters little that the incentive of the movement toward the commune was the material interest of the people. Opposed to the spirit of the Christianity of the Councils, which made obedience the fundamental principle, the spirit of France, which, by way of the Renaissance and the Encyclopædia, was to reach the Revolution—the spirit of France revealed itself in this movement with a youth and a strength that it never again possessed. For two hundred years it gave to the cities of the Ile-de-France, of Picardy, and of Champagne, a richly flourishing civilization, confused in its appearances, but of an inner rhythm so powerful that it constrained feudalism to take refuge in the country, where it brought about the Jacquerie two or three centuries later, and—under pretext of exterminating heresy—to fall upon the cities of the south, whose culture and growing free spirit it crushed. This was the terrible ransom of the liberty of the north. The foci of energy were still too scattered on our soil, the

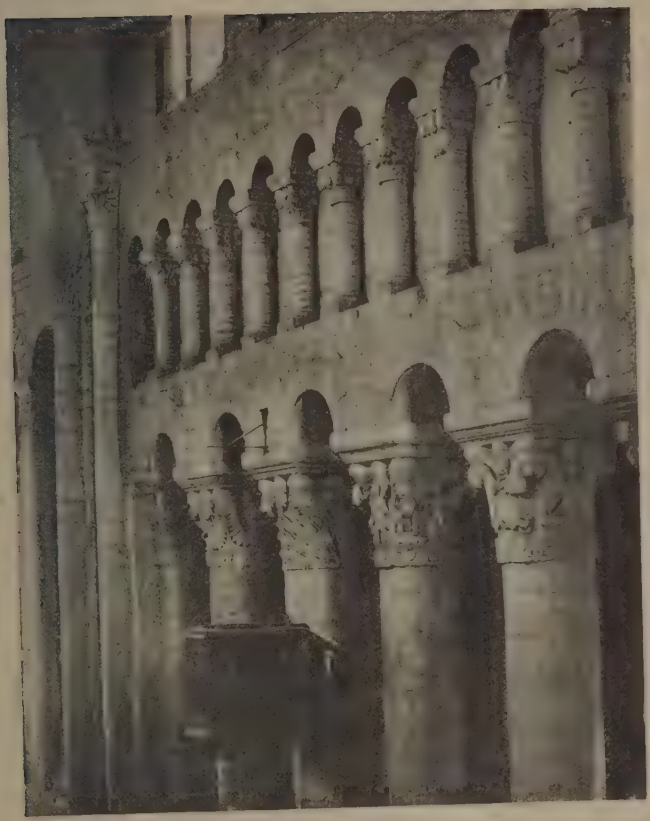
CHURCH OF COULOMBES (XII Century). Detail of a column. (*Louvre.*)

antagonism among the provinces was too sharp for the people to be able to feel solidarity in itself everywhere and in a co-ordinated effort to overthrow the political powers which it still needed to protect itself against the enemy from without.

Filled with the eager life that had been restrained for so long a time the French Commune assigned to each

Arles (xii and xiii Centuries). Façade of Saint-Trophime, detail.

person the work for which he was best fitted. It was an association of strong corporations representing every stratum of society, wherein individual temperaments obeyed no other rules than those of the spontaneous harmony we see in the woods—made up of a hundred thousand trees which plunge into the same soil, are watered by the same rains and fertilized by the same winds. The Commune entered history with a power that gives it that character of necessity which we now recognize as the "Greek miracle" and the "Jewish miracle." The art, formidable and one that expressed it, was born with it in France, and died with it there. It was the French soul delivered into its own

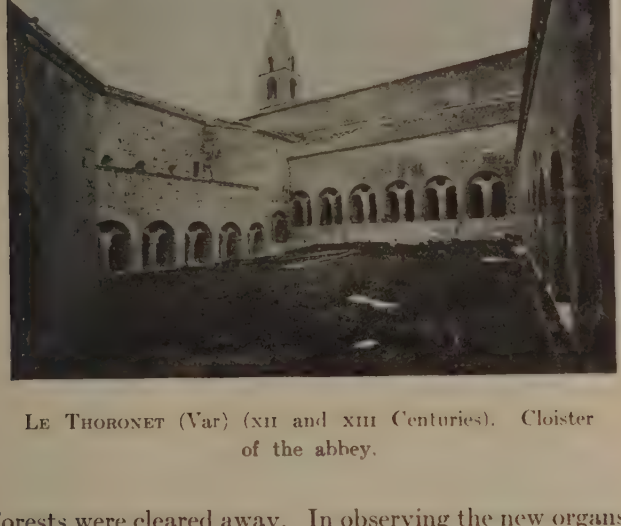


SAINT-GENOU (Indre) (XII Century). Capitals of the nave.

keeping for the first and the last time. The peoples whom it penetrated with its vitalizing force could accept it and adapt it to their needs—they could not touch its inner principle without, at the same time, ruining its national and social significance. Between the Vosges, the English Channel, and the Loire it was really life, order, truth. It was the barn and the farm and the house of the cities which silhouetted the lacework of its carving and its pinnacles against the sky, the narrow house of earth and of wood bordering the round-backed bridges and the tortuous lanes. It was the thick wall that bit into the rock, the high wall as clear-cut as consciousness, the haughty refuge that dominated the sea, the egoistic abbey where slow lives wore away, to the rhythm of the hours of the church services. It was the little country church around which a few huts were gathered at the foot of the curtain wall under the dungeon that, for ten generations of men, prevented the long and fertile contact of those who lived in its shadow with those whom it confined. It was the great cathedral. It was strength, it was the dream and the need, the belly, the heart, and the armor. The same spontaneous harmony was everywhere, issuing from the desire of the people and burning out at the same time that it did. The crenelated towers, proclaimed, to be sure, in the face of the productive commune, the apparently antagonistic principle of the right of conquest. But with it they proclaimed the same principle of life: they were built by the master mason who directed the work of the cathedral. And the cathedral was born with the communes, grew during their time of maturity, covered itself with statues and stained glass, and then languished and ceased to grow when they declined and died. Noyon, Soissons, Laon, Rheims, Amiens, Sens, Beauvais—wherever we find a great commune the great cathedral

appears, vast and bold in the proportion that the commune is well armed and well established, and in proportion to the vitality of the communal spirit.

The cities of France, during two centuries of relative peace, had torn down their walls. Their houses spread all along the rivers and the roads; the neighboring



LE THORONET (Var) (XII and XIII Centuries). Cloister of the abbey.

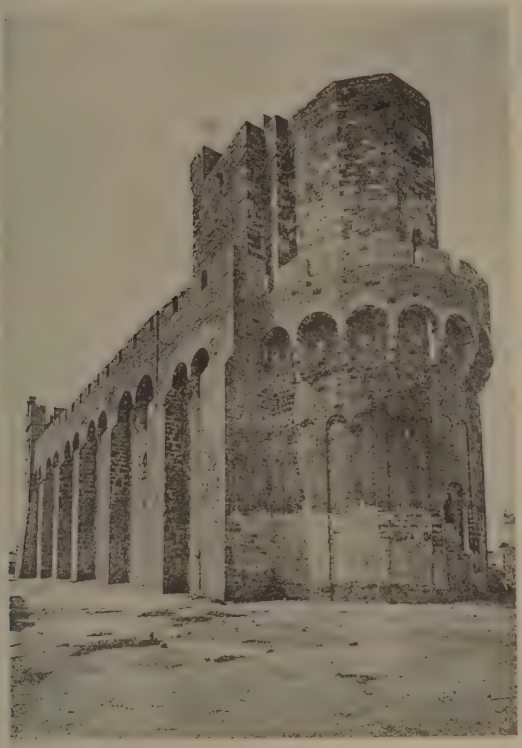
forests were cleared away. In observing the new organs that grew little by little from the re-formed social body—to build dwellings, to pave the streets and stretch chains there, to bring vegetables and wood from the country, to kill animals and shear them, to tan leather and forge iron—men saw that their common interests in these activities increased their strength. The concentration of the social forces made possible the birth of that wonderful hope which is born spon-

taneously in an organism, when all its elements harmonize in the mind which is directed toward a practical purpose that lies within reach. All the guilds together felt that from their instinct there was germi-

Mont-Saint-Michel (xii Century). The gallery.

nating an ever-growing imperious desire which, for its satisfaction, demanded the creation of a central organ that should summarize the effort whose power and necessity were expressed in the ensemble of the Commune. The church of the clergy was too narrow and too dark, the crowd that was rising with the sound of a sea begged for a church of its own; it felt in itself the courage and the knowledge necessary to build that church to its own stature. Its desire was to have the whole great work of building pass, with the material and the moral life, from the hands of the cloistered monk into those of the living people. No longer should

the poor folk who lived in the shadow of the monasteries enter in fear at the hour of the service to hear the voice of the Church in the darkness of the low vault.



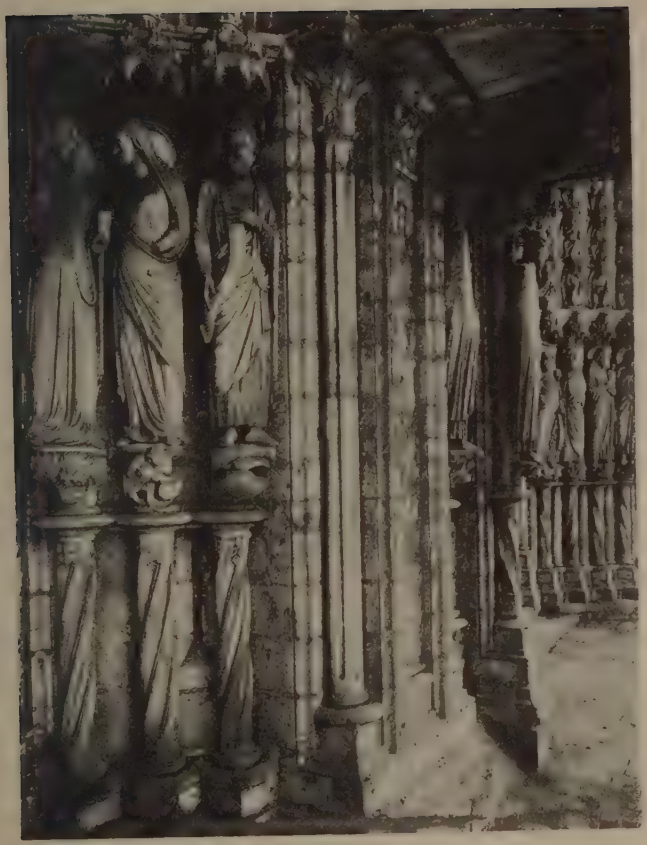
Saintes-Maries de la Mer (xii Century). Apse.

The Church should be the common house, the storehouse of abundance, the labor exchange, and the popular theater; it should be the sonorous and luminous

house which the flood of mankind could invade at any hour, a great vessel, capable of containing the whole city, the ark filled with tumult on market days, with dances on feast days, with the sound of the tocsin on the days of revolt, with singing on church days, with the voice of the people on all days.[1]

Some of these great temples, to be sure, spring from the pavement amid the silence of the crowds—in Paris, in Bourges, in Chartres, where the communal spirit did not conquer. But Bourges is a city royal and under the sword of the king; its workers, enriched by the court, escaped the power of the feudal lord. Without anxiety or remorse, the cathedral of Bourges spread out the holiday splendor of its porticos at the base of its enormous, irregular mass. In Paris, also a city royal, Notre Dame covers itself with statues and magnifies the light of the day by the rose windows of its transepts at the moment when the citizens and the merchants strive for freedom. At Chartres, whether the vision of the pure façade and the spire dominates us or whether, on passing through the nave, we are gripped by the sensation of poignant mystery, we know well that we are in the presence of an obscure tragedy of the heart. The prodigious harmony has something disenchanted about it, something in which one divines the torment of an imprisoned conscience. How could Roman austerity tolerate in its shadow the radiance, given forth by the sensuous glory of the race of statues which guards the enigma of the nave? Here theocratic will clashes with popular desire without either one becoming aware of it, and from the unconscious conflict there spurts up an invisible flame—the dull,

[1] The greater part of the ideas expressed in this chapter have already been defended with profound logic and authority by Viollet-le-Duc in his *Dictionnaire d' Architecture*. It must be said, however, that his writing suffers from an excess of laical narrowness.



CHARTRES (XII Century). North portal of the cathedral.

mystical, agonizing beauty of a great idea that contains the secret of a world and cannot formulate itself.

IV

Everywhere else the multitude is master of the works. The honest master builder, to whom the Commune and the Bishop turn, knows practically nothing save his trade. Behind him is the confused Byzantine-Romanesque tradition which he possesses imperfectly; before him is a problem to be solved: to build an edifice vast enough to contain the inhabitants of a city. He knows his material well, the stone of France, powdery, watery, and easy to work. He has his compass, his water level, his plumb line, and his square. Around him are good workmen, of the same spirit as himself, filled with faith, not in the least disturbed by worry as to social questions or by doubt as to religion. He possesses that clear good sense, that free and direct logic, which later brought out of the same soil such men as Rabelais, Montaigne, Molière, La Fontaine, Rameau, Diderot, and Voltaire. A new function appears, so complex that it absorbs the life of the century. For the new organ to adapt itself to it, nothing more is needed than that the master builder consent to be a man of his time, like the least of his companions.

Whatever the force in the ascending movement of the French churches, whatever their lyrism, their perfect intelligence lies too deep within them to make its impression at once. Their whole form is determined by the ogive window that hides itself proudly in the upper shadows of the nave. It has not revealed to us the subtle passage that leads a French or a Norman mason to isolate in the Romanesque church the projections from the ribbed vault and to raise its lateral

edges by means of the angular window which the Crusaders had seen in the Orient. But it was that window which overcame the round arch and the vertical weight that crushed the vessel. Everything is to radiate from the ogive—the drop of its diagonal ribbing on to the columns that spring up to separate the three naves, the entire vault that is inscribed in their intervals, and the flying buttress that carries off obliquely the thrust of the vault. Everywhere else one finds the immense expanses of glass through which the light penetrates. . . . The logic is that of the skeleton, wherein all pressures are balanced and transmitted; it is the image of the absolute transported into the perishable order of the scattered elements of life. Between the flying buttress and the vault, the edifice is like the carcass of a gigantic cetacean suspended in space by

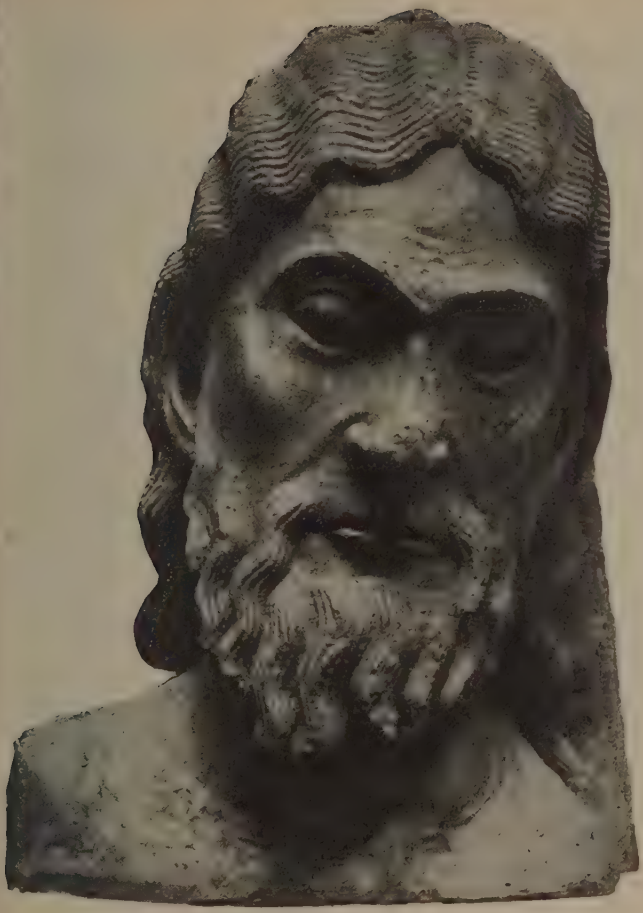
CHARTRES (XII Century). The month of July. (*Cathedral.*)

iron hooks to permit the light of heaven to traverse it in every direction. It seems to float in the air.[1]

Gothic architecture was opposed to leaving anything in darkness. Indeed, it died of its love of the light. Sens, Beauvais, Laon, Soissons, Amiens, Bourges (in spite of its five naves) are full of light, like our modern markets of iron and glass. But in these cathedrals there is, of course, the necessary framework which made some dark places; there is the stone skeleton work of the rose window, the leads which hold the stained glass, the wire netting which protects it, the

[1] The ogive, of which an example is cited in England, at Durham, about 1104, appears for the first time in France, probably, about 1115, at Morienval, near Soissons and Noyon, between the Ile-de-France, Picardy, and Champagne, where, through Saint-Denis and Notre Dame, Amiens and Beauvais, Rheims, Laon, Sens, etc., it saw the birth of the most numerous and most beautiful architectural works consequent upon it. Who discovered it? Several master builders, perhaps, each one contributing a new idea, from the association of which the ogive was born spontaneously. Here is one of the most surprising characteristics of the Middle Ages in the Occident, and one that it shares with hardly any other art than that of ancient Egypt and India. Of all the image makers, scarcely a name has come down to us, and if we know who some dozens of architects were, it has required patient researches or chance to bring forth their names from the municipal account books that slept in our archives. This is an anonymous art, and, consequently, it is collective and disinterested, it is the *social art*. These men thought of nothing but the accomplishment of their task, and not one of them dreamed of laying claim to being the father of the most original creation in architecture since the vault of the Assyrians.

Guillaume de Sens, who was one of the greatest of the constructors and who was brought to England to build the nave of Canterbury, passed as the inventor of the ogive for a long time. He was, doubtless, one of the first to apply it to the construction of an edifice—the cathedral of Sens—whose whole structure it determines. But it seems to have received almost as complete an application, for an ensemble, with the building of the choir of Saint Denis (1144), and in some churches of a transitional character dating from that period—Noyon, Lisieux, Le Mans, etc. In any case, it was in the Ile-de-France that, before the middle of the twelfth century, the architects systematized a process of construction which permitted Jean d'Orbais to build Rheims, Robert de Luzarches to build Amiens, Pierre de Montereau to build the Sainte-Chapelle, and a hundred others in every part of France and Europe to erect buildings of a unity of structure that is absolute and of a variety of aspects that is inexhaustible.



CHARTRES (XII Century). Head of a man. (*Cathedral.*)

dirt of centuries, due to all the old dust that has heaped up. . . . When the cathedral is dark, it is because the master builder has miscalculated his effort, because he

CHARTRES (XII and XIII Centuries). South transept of the cathedral.

expected the building to yield more than it could, because he wanted to crowd too many people into it, as in Paris, where galleries press down on the four lateral

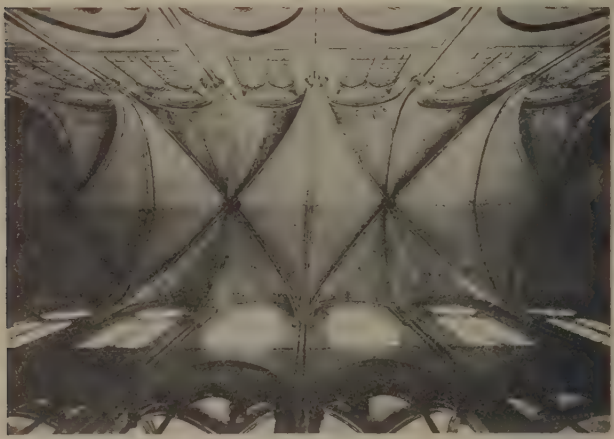
CHARTRES (XII and XIII Centuries). Transept of the cathedral.

naves. The object of the stained glass was not to darken the nave but to glorify the light, whose glow scintillated with the richness of powdered jewels. And this glass was used not only in the churches but for the rooms of the châteaux and for the houses of the middle class. The memory of the carpets hung up in the mosques filled the minds of the men, who were returning from the Orient, with visions transfigured by enthusiasm and regret. They opened the side of the wall to set into it a translucent painting, a fresco shot through by flames, illumined by the heavens. The stained glass offered to the pale light of the north its flaming matrix so that the sun should give a warmer caress to the stone that rose everywhere. Its azures, its dark blues, its saffron and golden yellows, its oranges, its vinous or purple reds, and its dark greens streaked the nave with the blood of Christ and the sapphire of the sky, with the russet of the autumn grapevines, and with the emerald of the distant seas and of the meadows round about. In the depths of the chapels of the apse, where the spot made by the candles caused the darkness to tremble, the light of the windows weakened only to accumulate around the sanctuary, the agonizing vagueness and the voluptuousness of its mystery. When, on one of those gray days of the Ile-de-France, one enters Notre Dame to wait for the sun, one knows when it has come out by the blond inundation that suddenly invades the nave, renders it aërial and golden, and little by little touches and makes dazzling the very ribbing which, under their rigid palm ornaments, suspends the shadow of the forests. At evening, when the darkness is almost nocturnal in the vast interior whose vaults one sees hovering high up like the wings of a great bird of the night, one thing alone remains luminous—the glass of the windows. The dying light from outside spatters the black pillars and the pavement which has

SAINT-YRIEIX (Corréze) (XIII Century). Nave of the church, detail.

disappeared, with a fiery shower, more intense and more glowing in proportion as the darkness increases. The rose windows gather up the last reflections of the sun that has set to illuminate the shadows with them.

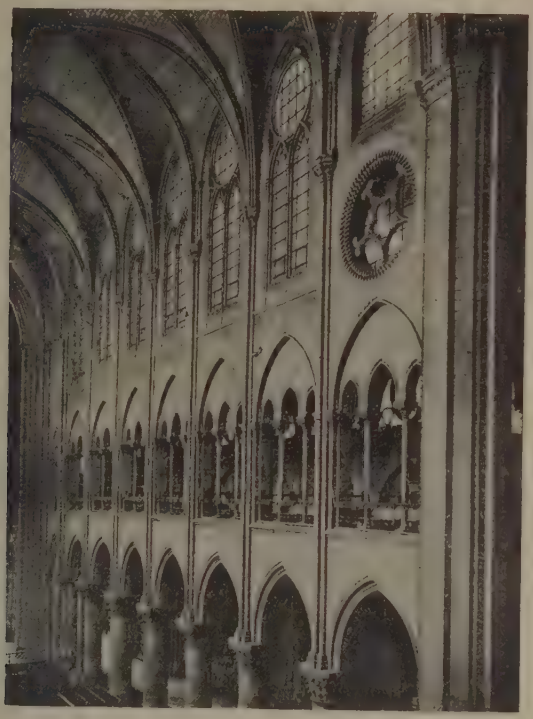
Everything that gives the cathedral its meaning, everything that determines its aspect—the irresistible



PARIS (XIII Century). Vault of the nave. (*Cathedral.*)

rise of its lines, the balancing of the curves that raise it above the cities—everything is brought about by the desire for light; and the desire for light increased among its architects at the same time that they became more familiar with the handling of its curves and its lines. Never did an edifice so truthful proclaim its function with such simplicity. At every point the bones were just beneath the flesh; each one recognized its role: there was not a recess, there was not a projection which did not justify its presence. The fixed framework of the exterior, the immense parallel arches which

start up everywhere to suspend the central nave or to radiate to the apse, carry the building up into space and cradle it there, like the articulated members of a



PARIS (XIII Century). Triforium, wall, and vault.
(*Cathedral.*)

gigantic animal. Every one of its organs, from the haughtiest to the most obscure, participates in its power—the humble ornament, the flower that varies a plane that would be too bare without it, the slight bas-

relief that gives movement to a profile, the small belfries that load the pinnacles to increase the strength of the piles which catch the thrust of the flying buttresses, the niches for statues hollowing out the buttresses wherever there is no pressure, the gargoyles that spout the rain water away from the building so that it shall not gnaw the stone, the long grooved columns on the body of the pillars themselves, giving to the supports of the vaults that nervous and sustained spring which causes them to spread out at their summit with the ease of a sheaf.

Nowhere else has sculptured ornament become so much a part of the edifice. In India the statue is incorporated in the building because both, at the same time, grow out of a pantheistic conception of life which sweeps the builders and the statue makers into its own headlong movement. Here, not only does the unity of conception, of traditions, and beliefs carry in the same current all who share in the work, but every statue, every carved column, every branch, or fruit on the wall is there to give more balance and solidity to the ensemble. The ornament gives animation and movement and carries off into space everything that would serve to rob the cathedral of mobility and to bind it to the soil.

Bare in the beginning, at Sens, at Saint-Denis, in the first tier of the cathedral of Paris and at Soissons, bare as a race abounding with life, the cathedral was covered in a century with the forms which this race had found on its pathway. The porches, the tympanums, the lintels, the galleries of colonnettes, the high towers —sonorous organs raising in a single flight their thickets of close-set stones, everything became part of the miracle, and this whole soil, which had been barren before, sprouted with trembling bas-reliefs, with the carving of the foliage that seemed ready to burst with sap—

Tour (Calvados) (XIII Century). Belfry of the church.

and in a thousand powerful statues quivered the life of a people. In the mist or in the sunshine, the world of the painted images caused the façades, from their severe base to their sweeping towers, to partake of the movement of the black streets into which the neighboring countryside penetrates unceasingly, with the hucksters, the traders, their horses and sheep, with the boatmen and the market gardeners who bring vegetables and wood to the city. On days of prayer, the people ask the stone symbols for the human significance of the mystic emotion that pervades the multitude of pure and gentle beings which surround the cathedral of Chartres. On rainy days, people take refuge under the porches of Notre Dame—the three porches inscribed in the bare wall, which is not more sober and simple and firmly built than they, and the stories that the image makers in their sheltered workshops have been telling for a century are discussed by the citizens. On feast days and in fine weather, people stop to look at the way in which the façade of Amiens is blossoming, as if the reapers and the vintagers on its doors were covering it with vine branches and sheaves—from the embroidered galleries to the flames of the great rose window. On fair-days, people at the top of the towers of Laon would see the oxen bending to their work in the fields. On coronation days, or at times of royal pomp, when the processions defile between the rows of narrow houses where the tapestries hang, people follow the harmony and the tumult of the marchers and are engulfed with the latter in the five porches of Bourges that shimmer with their painted sculptures; while at Rheims, the sculptures are carried on up to the summit of the cathedral, from which there pours the incessant torrent of the forms and colors of nature.

But inside—not an image. The nave would lose something of its sonority, its grandeur, its light. The

vault, the generating principle, is bare, and only the capital of the columns is permitted to flower. The long, slender shafts, the long ribbing that ascends and descends to outline the stained glass of the windows, the absolute lines that converge and that answer one

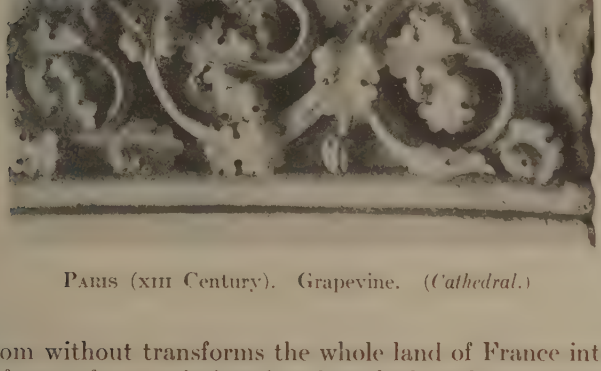
Flavigny (Côte-d'Or) (xiii Century). Capital, choir of the abbey.

another, the pure radiance of the rose window—everything has the abstract force and the nakedness of the mind. And everywhere it is function that determines form. The armed castle is a church turned inside out, its exterior bare for purposes of resistance, and covered with frescoes and carpets within, well supplied

with carved wood furniture and with forged iron for the delight of the eye and for repose. The only French cathedral in the ogive style, whose exterior is bare and whose form presents a hostile mass, was built at Albi in a spirit of defiance and combat—it is a fortress rising in a block to surround the sanctuary of the spirit with armor. In the south, the Roman majesty of the wall is retained, and even, at certain moments, enhanced. Especially in those places where the Romanesque spirit and the ogival spirit fuse, at Saintes-Maries de la Mer, at Aigues-Mortes, at Albi, at Agde, at the Château of the Popes in Avignon, a sublime art will appear. In the rhythmical alternation of the massive wall that mounts straight upward and of the offset inscribed directly in its thickness to make openings for the superimposed windows under the proud ogive at the top, it is so lofty, so bare, so measured and sober that, beside it— whether a church or a fortress—the Romanesque temple seems crushed or heavy or frail and the French cathedral seems overloaded with the decoration on its exterior.

In the architecture of the ogive, as in the Romanesque architecture, several schools have been isolated. And, in fact, it is as easy to distinguish in one's first glance at the ogival building, the sobriety and the measure of the Ile-de-France and the Valois, the gayety, the animation, the truculence, and the verve of Picardy and Champagne, the square and rugged force of Brittany, the profusion and complexity of Normandy, as, in the Romanesque construction, one can distinguish the patience of the workmen of Poitoux, the gathered power of the Auvergnats, the tense elegance of the men of Provence, and the vigor and the fineness of the men of Périgord. It is also easy to recognize the meeting of the two great styles in the stately eloquence of the Burgundians. But in one group as in the other and

despite the general tendency which, in the south, gives predominance to the spiritual, abstract, structural, and didactic element and in the north to all the gradations of the living, anecdotal, and picturesque element, despite the predominance, in a word, of sculpture in the north and architecture in the south, a constant interpenetration of local styles, of epochs, and of influences



Paris (xiii Century). Grapevine. (*Cathedral.*)

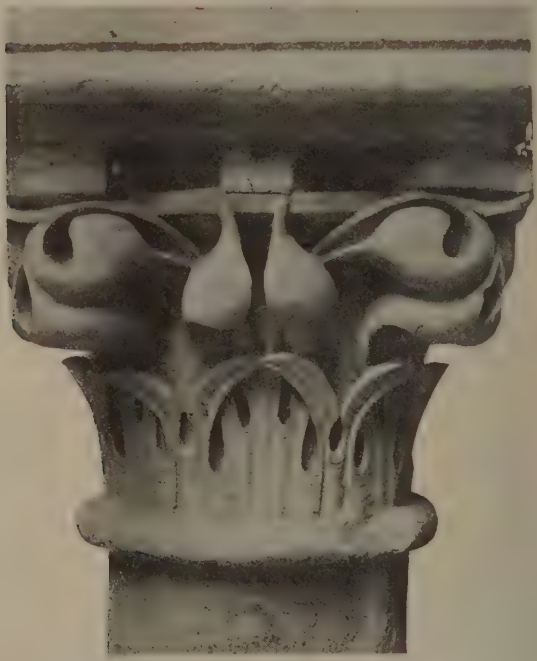
from without transforms the whole land of France into a forest of stone designed and worked, and to compare with it there is perhaps only the growth that India brought forth from her miraculous soil. And we may add that Indian art and the art of the Khmers and the Javanese, and Byzantine art as well as that of the Arabs, and the art of Greece as well that of Rome, by direct or indirect connection, by reason or intuition, by the contact of thought or by chance, seem to gather here from every place on earth to summarize and co-ordinate themselves for a century in the ever-alert sensibility and the ready intelligence which characterize France. From one end of the land to the other, a wonderful variety of sensation and expression becomes easily a

part of the spiritual unity of will and faith. Whether the Romanesque temple is carved like an ivory or whether it is simple, whether its tower is square, polygonal, or round, solid or open to the air by its juxtaposed windows, whether the belfry rises straight as a cry or whether it curves like the line of a lamentation, whether the apse is circular or whether it forms a polyhedron, whether the arches are multiplied on the moving surface or barely indicated at the summit of the straight walls that are as fierce as ramparts, everywhere the majesty and the force of the doctrine impregnate the expressive surfaces with the savor and the rhythm of life. Sometimes, on the ogival façades, the great silent planes are displayed almost bare between bare buttresses or, on the contrary, the buttresses are fluted like organ pipes, as if to accentuate their vertical flight toward the sky, and the façades are covered by a lacework of leaves and branches. Sometimes the porches are inscribed in the walls, at other times they bristle with pediments, spires, and pinnacles. The rose windows may be circular or flame-shaped, the number and the disposition of the towers vary endlessly—now they are cut into by high windows, now designed with clusters of colonnettes like wheat sheaves, or again they pass by insensible transitions from the square to the polygon and from the polygon to the cone. But everywhere the flood of the animated forms and innumerable aspects of life permits the logic of the function and the rationalism of the mind to appear freely. Even and here the miracle is perhaps more surprising —when three centuries and four or five styles have mingled the Romanesque and the Gothic in a simple monument, the whole indivisible world of sentiments and sensations that it presents enters in a mass, and forever, into the immutable order of the mind.

Bagé (Ain) (xii and xiii Centuries). Belfry of the church.

V

In reality, when France was covering with living flesh a framework so logical that it fixed the form of the monument in its every detail, she was still pursuing



LAON (XIII Century). Capital in the triforium. (*Cathedral.*)

the conquest of herself. The French mind is of all the most structure-loving, but the structure must be simple in the proportion that its surface is mobile and rich in gradations, it must remain close to her soil, to her

AMIENS (XII to XIV Century). The cathedral.

rivers, and to the winds that cross her skies. The men of this land have always loved to give to matter the image of their visions. The first engraved and carved objects which the world knows appeared on the territory that extends from the Atlantic to the Pyrenees and to the Cévennes. The Gauls beat, forged, and molded bronze before the arrival of the Legions. The Greco-Latin genius became vibrant each time that it touched this soil.

And yet before sculpture had departed from the cloister entirely, the saints, both men and women, had been far-away gods whom the people could barely see at the summit of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Once they had gained the street they lived there. The local god, the god of works and of days, the god of the fountains and the woods, the genius, who participated in all the acts of the agricultural, social, and industrial life of the people, joined the company of the saints—without any one perceiving it. Sculpture was suddenly invaded everywhere by a moral sentiment, which was as familiar and as penetrating and as simple as the living activity of humanity always is; and, without visible connection, this sentiment continued the oldest memories of man. Its actions were those of confession and protection and health, and their attraction was irresistible. Hands sought other hands and found them, faces bent toward other faces, from which emanated the gentleness that men show toward each other when they need one another. The virgin, deified against the desire of the clergy, carried her child in the crowd and showed him to the poor people.

Surely, those were good Christians who sculptured those round torsos, those flanks, swelling with child, which are lifted up by the bulk of the little one, those long limbs, nervous or full, under the woolen dress, and those good smiling faces which they copied in the

workshop from the women who brought them their soup. If all they really loved in Christianity was its tender human myths, they accepted without question its belief in the supernatural, and, in consequence, they were not too severe with themselves for the acts which they committed. As long as they did their work well, they considered that their sin of gluttony had the advantage of renewing their strength and that their sins of incontinence compensated for many other disagreeable things. The churchmen were no more offended than the laymen by the ingenuous wantonness of the stories which the popular imagination never ceased to bring forth. We must remember that in these centuries, morals were not very edifying.[1] Almost all of the priests themselves had concubines, and not one of them made a secret of it. Life was too rich in rejuvenated strength to be restrained by any dikes. The man of this time brought to the service of the church his greatest and his simplest love; but it was the spirit which he adored, and the very power of his faith set free his power of action by rescuing him from

SCHOOL OF RHEIMS (XIII Century). Angel, detail. (*Louvre.*)

[1] See in Lavisse's *Histoire de France:* "The Thirteenth Century," by M. Langlois.

the letter of the law. There was many a nudge of the elbow, many a slap exchanged during the preaching, and sometimes it was the priest who got the drubbing. And now it was no longer monks who continually represented the virtues on the lintels and the tympanums. Much more frequently it was the virtues, with the enchanted smile of a feminine face, that welcomed the poor people. It was thought very natural to see demons pushing into the caldrons a gesticulating troop of soldiers, bishops, and kings, all shuddering with fear. The people, in France, was too sure of itself not to pardon injuries, for it said what it thought with perfect candor, and although its hell was more comic than terrifying, it opened the gates, in its malice, to those who did not respect the task the accomplishment of which they pretended was their sacred mission.

The Almighty seldom appeared in the statuary of the churches. The poor image makers did not aspire that high. They were unable to create that which they had not seen. They did not lack imagination, certainly, and even a vague, universal, and confused culture. But their imagination moved within limits — immense and multiform, be it said—of the life that surrounded them, and their instinct as artists was too imperious to permit their theological and legendary culture to furnish them anything but pretexts for the manifestation of that instinct. Our Lady the Virgin stepped out of the stone alive, because the image of maternity, in this period of superabundant life, was everywhere. And if the saints and the angels surrounded the portals, it was because those who suffered saw faces of kindness and faces of hope bending over them daily in their distress.

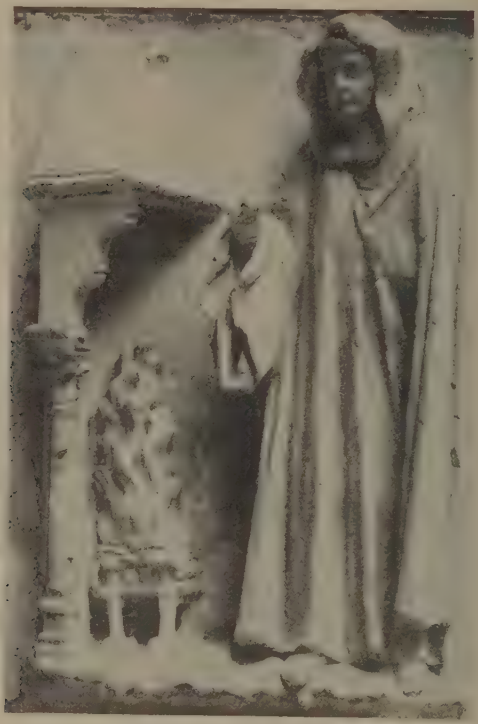
The Church, in the course of its defensive organization, had turned aside, to the profit of its external power, the impulsion of sentiment from which Christianity

had sprung. The France of the thirteenth century restored this impulsion of sentiment in the full life of humanity. Under the pressure of this inner force, the

RHEIMS (XIII Century). A knight. (*Cathedral.*)

old world of theology cracked everywhere. Christianity, which until then had dominated life, was dominated by it and carried along in its movement. Moving on a higher plane than that of the Semitic idea of Saint Paul, who had prepared life for its explosion by forcing

repose upon it, contrary to the discipline of Rome which, for a thousand years, had been raising dikes to protect it against the anarchical forces from without,



Rheims (xiii Century). Winter. (*Cathedral.*)

life once more joined in the fraternal spirit of Him who was born in a stable, who was followed by troops of the poor, who received adulterous women, and who spoke to the flowers; it did so because man was emerging

from a social state harder than that of the old world and because an insurrection of virile tenderness was becoming the universal need.

RAMPILLON (Seine-et-Marne) (XIII Century). Detail of the base.

The civilizations of antiquity wept at their decline. Their sorrow has seemed declamatory and grimacing because life was leaving them. The Middle Ages, in which life was rising, mastered their suffering. They were happy, as happy as the old world in its full sweep upward, and for them pity was never more than one element in the generated energy of life. They did not even realize how courageous they were when they stretched out their two hands to all who asked for them. Without any effort, they found, in the fulfillment of their daily task, the social principle of Christianity, which the fathers of the Church had sought in a theocratic organization that was momentarily necessary to protect the growth of the new peoples, but that was a drawback to the manifestation of their original thought.

This social character defines French sculpture. When we see it from our distance, to be sure, when we see it in its ensemble from the twelfth to the fifteenth century, it strongly recalls the progression of the schools of antiquity from archaism to academism,

ROUEN (XIII Century). Base and shafts of a door of the cathedral.

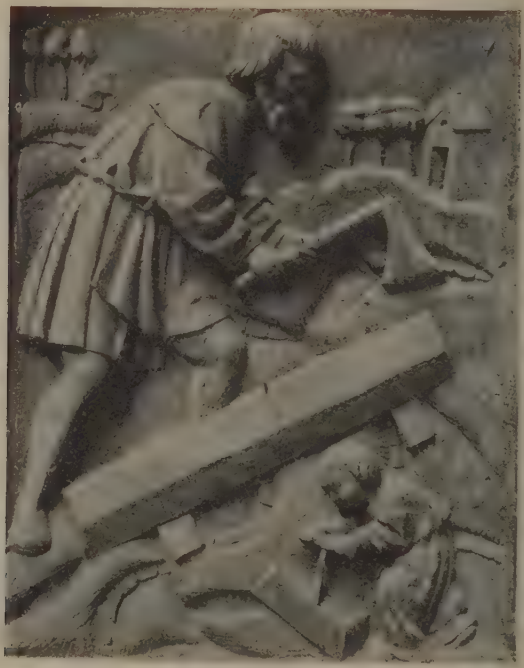
with their passage through a point of equilibrium wherein science and sentiment, rising to their loftiest certitude, shine from the same focus. Romanesque art has the smiling strength and the rhythmical stiffness of the sixth century of Greece; the art of the thirteenth century is calm and mature like that with which Phidias and his precursors affirmed their complete self-possession. Afterward, in France as in Greece, virtuosity —descriptive, naturalistic, and picturesque—gains the upper hand little by little. Doubtless, the essential

difference is that Gothic sculpture does not tend above all to the realization of that balance of volumes by which the statue makers of Olympia and of the Parthenon passed from one form to another form, from one

Rheims (xiii Century). Caryatid. (*Cathedral.*)

idea to another idea, without leaving a trace by which the mind could follow the course that had been taken: it had to enter, with the sculptors, into the consciousness and the need of the universal harmony. When Gothic sculpture seizes this balance, we seem to be in the presence of an isolated attempt; a solitary in-

dividual seems to have made his impressive appearance in the midst of a murmuring throng. . . . The Greek artists almost invariably spread out the inner life of



RAMPILLON (Seine-et-Marne) (XIII Century). The Carpenter. Altar screen of the church.

the stone in rhythmic waves over the whole extent of the planes, to make all the figures participate in the cosmic equilibrium. The Frenchman almost invariably concentrates it in a bowed forehead, in a raised chin, a shoulder, a dress, an elbow, a haunch or a knee,

RHEIMS (XIII Century). Figures from the porch. (*Cathedral.*)

which often breaks the line that one anticipates, so that we may see more clearly the direct, actual, and simple meaning of the action that he wants to express. . . . In the sculptures of Olympia and in the Fates of the Parthenon there was, doubtless, the dawn of a modeling similar in spirit to the Gothic. But the desire for harmony dominated everything.

The contours of the Gothic statue are less defined than they were among the Egyptians and less subtle than among the Greeks. They are more varied and more living, for the light changes more frequently and is more diffused, and above all because they express a world of moral needs which neither the Greeks nor the Egyptians could feel. Never had shadows and lights been distributed with such an understanding of their psychological value. Never had the material been worked with an emotion so concrete, never had a more profound, a more complete, and a more gentle radiance emanated from it, from the full and broadly treated forms which exhibit the material to our eyes. Never had the necessity for effort been accepted with a more joyous soul by a youth with more courage to live its life, though it was better prepared than the younger races for the misfortune that awaited it. Certain statues of Rheims remind one of the Apollo of Olympia, by the rise into the light, from which their brow seems to emerge. The pure spring water that issues from the rock of Hellas seems to flow over the sides and the limbs of the statues of women, which watch over the portal above the transept of Chartres. Once more, men have lent their heroism to the gods.

It would be erroneous to conclude that even the greatest master builders and image makers among the French had ever possessed philosophic ideas so elevated as those of the sculptors from whom the Greek thinkers derived the life of the mind. But outside of

the geographical conditions which so sensibly differentiated northern France with its humidity and its coolness from the arid and burnt land of Greece, life

Séez (xiii Century). Splaying of the door of the cathedral.

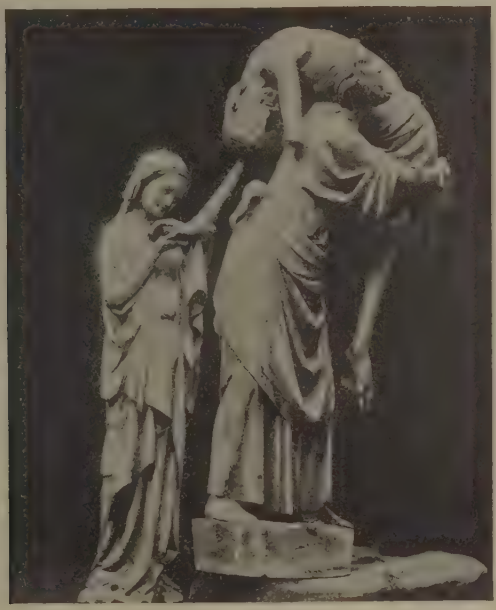
had been harder in the Middle Ages than in the century of Pericles, war and misery had made it more necessary for the masses to bring about an active solidarity, and man was more profoundly necessary to man. Moreover, these different conditions of natural

and social life revealed themselves unexpectedly in the atmosphere of sentimental legend that Christianity created little by little. It is indubitable that the Greek sculptor who tore the ancient world from its exhausted rhythms, was intellectually as superior to the mason of the cathedral, as the "Prometheus" of Æschylus or the "Antigone" of Sophocles is to a thirteenth-century mystery play; but it is certain that the mason of the cathedral easily rejoined him in the universal eurhythmy, because he was an element of the monumental symphony which the instinct, common to a whole throng, causes to spurt from its heart.

VI

The entire people in the Middle Ages, with all that it knew, all that it desired, and all that it confusedly dreamed, built its temple, the house of its reality and its hope, as it was building up at the same time, through the freedom of the Commune, its right to live, the right for future ages to conquer through thought. It was not, as has been claimed, that each inhabitant of the city and the country contributed his stone to the pile. But the corporations which worked at it, the carpenters, the masons, the stonecutters, the glassmakers, the plasterers, the leadworkers, and the painters, all plumbed the lowest depths of the people whose forebodings and needs they drew forth wholeheartedly. The master builder laid out the plan, and distributed the work; then each man, with his instinct for independent action, animated a capital, sculptured an image, framed in lead the holiday splendor of a piece of stained glass, and set in line, between the diagonal ribbing, the little stones cut by hand that suspended the vault a hundred or a hundred and fifty feet above the soil. The cathedral lived so completely the life of

its builders that it changed at the same time they did, and one generation would erect a tier in the pointed style on top of a tier of round arches, while another would abandon the arm of a transept already half



The descent from the Cross, ivory (XIII Century). (*Louvre.*)

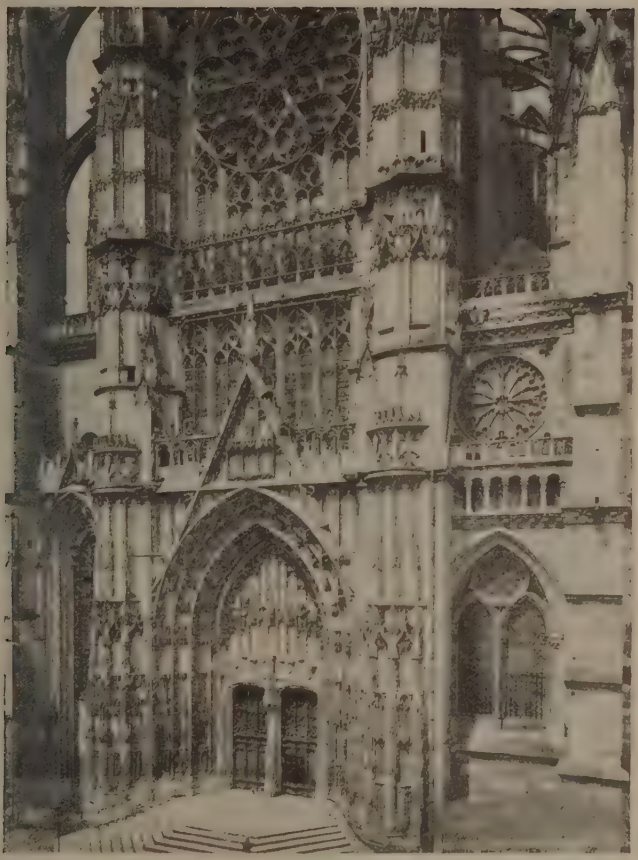
constructed, would add a crown of chapels, change the profile of the towers, multiply or leave them unfinished, or would set a rose window flaming at the front of a Romanesque nave which had been relieved of its vault. The cathedral rose, sank, and spread out with our feelings and our desires.

Hence its close, rich unity wherein, as in a crowd or

in nature, all the different forms derived their solidarity from the current of the same sap. Hence the liberty, the sweep, and the violence, and the sweetness of the hymn which these innumerable voices chanted and with which it still trembles. It was an Encyclopædia,

TROYES (XIII Century). Gargoyle. (*Church of Saint-Urbain.*)

chiseled with love from the stuff of which France is made. The Bible story and the Christian myth, translated into active life, were lost in the rising tide of the expressive forms which told, with their thousand mingling voices, everything that was contained in the soul, now mischievous, now naïve, now lyrical, now genial, of the men who had heard these voices awakening within them. The good knights were bringing back the dragons and chimeras from the Orient. The newly acquired strength of the imagination made more concrete the figures of the vampires and the man wolves, the moralizing beasts, and the talking beasts of the old fables in verse. As the image makers had not seen the legendary kings, saints, or bishops, they



Beauvais (xiii Century). South transept of the cathedral.

asked the men in the street to furnish them with the most characteristic faces. The cathedral trembled with the noise of the crafts and the forges. Here are the peasants sowing their wheat, reaping their grain, pressing out their grapes or their apples. Here are horses, asses, and oxen breaking their furrow, or dragging their cart. The goats and the sheep show no astonishment when, at the turn of a pillar, they meet an elephant, a rhinoceros, a hippopotamus, or a king or the Magi on their camels. Gothic sculpture is an image of freedom, uniting man's future with the far-away memories which he had saved from the shipwreck of the ancient world. Whether the cathedral remains awake or goes to sleep, these memories are ever-present and living, with a confused and murmuring life full of the songs of birds, of the sound of springs, and of the swarming of the creatures under the moss. About the capitals, the whole plant world sprouted with great buds, then with leaves of pure outline which earthy hands laid on the half-dressed stone; then came the overflow of vine branches with their leaves, and thick tree stems bearing all the leaves of France and sending forth their sound in the wind that animated the organ of the towers: the vine, the rosebush, the strawberry plant, the willow, the sage, the mallow, the clover, the celery, the cabbage, the thistle, the parsley, the watercress, the fern—the leaves of France dug out from matter in such a transport of the senses that they changed at every moment into vague moving forms—lips, breasts, and folds of flesh where universal life hesitated in its primitive appearances. The bas-reliefs that grew out of the walls seem the very flower of the stone; they seem to make concrete and visible, little by little, the forms that it contains in germ, so well does the image mingle with its surroundings, with its background of misty space.

There is nothing that more clearly reveals the futility of the old opposition between architecture and the so-called imitative arts than the French cathedral, where the living surfaces cover a living skeleton. There is nothing more superficial than the ordinary definition of plastics, whose function is not to imitate the world of

AIGUES-MORTES (XIII Century). Ramparts.

forms, but to seize in it the relationships which architecture precisely expresses most abstractly. It is not only its sculptured or painted ornamentation which causes architecture to re-enter the life of earth and sky, it is its first origin, the instinctive repetition that it presents of the great architecture of nature from which the human mind gathers up the elements of logical revelation that we call invention. All the vaults have evolved from the forms that were taught us by the cupola of the heavens and the droop of the long branches; all the columns are trees, all the walls are

rocks or cliffs, and the roof is spread out only to permit the people dwelling beneath it to shelter themselves from the winds of the night—it slopes only to carry

Albi (xiii Century). The cathedral.

off the rain to the earth, which drinks it. The northern countries, which are wooded and whose light is diffused, impose ornate façades on our imagination; the southern countries, which are bare and whose light is dazzling,

dictate long, pure lines: the Romanesque endured in the south. Water penetrates the stone of the north, changes it, mingles it with the damp mold, with the mosses and rotten leaves. The marble of the south is

SENS. Rose window of the transept of the cathedral.

so saturated with the sun that little by little it becomes a focus of light, a source of heat as life-giving as that which concentrates autumn and summer in fruit. Everything attaches to a soil the edifice built of the stone which was drawn from that soil; it belongs to it

as the waters and the winds and the color of the sky and the crops and the accustomed rhythm of the seasons. Under the pavement of the naves we get the forest underground, the thick columns plunge to the darkness of the crypt, to permit the vertical sweep of their shafts and the spreading of their branches and leaves to take root in the earth. In the French cathedral, in its long, pale columns, we get the tremulousness of the forests of alburnum and of birch, the light airy forests of Picardy and Champagne, and we see their illumined branches in the flames of the stained glass. When twilight floods the nave, making the pillars seem larger in its glow and thrusting back the solemn vaults even deeper into the mystery which darkens the gold of the waning light, one thinks of our oak forests. And the light vapor of our skies, permeating the whole mass of the air, mingling the confused movement of the ornamental forms with the silence of their depths, penetrating the openwork of the towers, and casting a veil of blond smoke over the conflagration of the stained glass, seems to lift the cathedral above the slopes and the plains, as it carries the heavy water of the winding rivers into the upper air, where we see the faint tremor of the trees whose leaves, shorn by autumn, are merged by the rain with the mud of the roads. Branches move, sounds arise, and a whispering begins again when the wind has died away. At Coutances, the lines of the spires of the central tower and of the polygonal belfries are characterized by the ascending movement with which they launch upward everywhere. They penetrate space with a flight so pure and so bare that their points are lost in it like voices. Laon, from its base to the top of its towers, is green with moss and wild plants, the buttresses of Beauvais, which spring up to a height three times greater than that of the woods of the country, have the sound of a forest in a

COUTANCES (XIII Century). Spire of the cathedral.

storm, and the old spire of Chartres is a golden flame hung in the mist.

VII

Nothing in this social and natural expression is foreign to the earth and to the people from which it came forth spontaneously. And the unity of the symphony is the more impressive, through the vast number of voices that entered it, for song and prayer

CAHORS (XIV Century). The Valentré Bridge.

to murmur, to weep, and to laugh, and to combine the changing melody of the lacework of stone and glass and their rays of light with the intermittent thunder of the bells and with the hum of the sonorous naves, where the plain song rises and falls. The cathedral often sheltered the neighboring university[1] and never entirely relinquished to it the cult of the intellectual

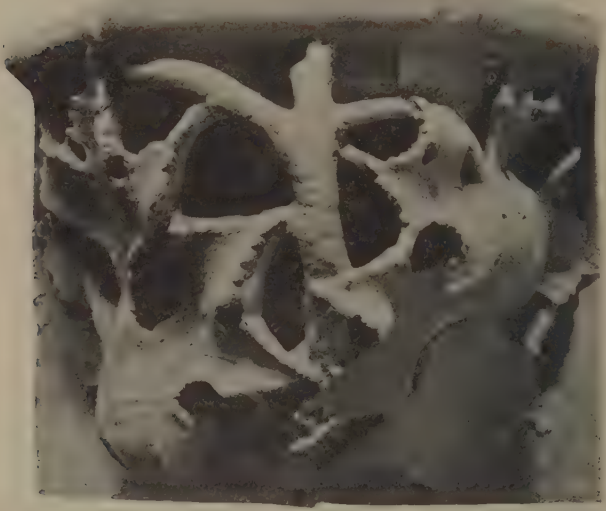
[1] The councils of the University of Paris were held at St. Julien le Pauvre.

life, for the students met the artisans under its vaults to commune with them in the collective and confused elaboration of farces, mystery plays, and moralities; and so, even before the university, it presented a powerful summary of the idea of the century and of the images of life. It formulated for us those turbulent schools where four or five nations came for their instruction, where the overlapping elements of all kinds collaborate—the master with his disciples, the Greek philosophers with the fathers of the Church, and what is taught with what is learned. The immeasurable mind of Aristotle, from which revolutionary thought claimed its authority against the theologians, would have recognized in the disordered unity and the rich material of this time the irruption of the genius of the senses which every thousand years arises from the depths of the peoples to save the world from the dangers of pure abstraction.

Men had cursed the flesh,

AMIENS (XIV Century). The gilded Virgin. (*Cathedral.*)

disdained form, and repressed the desire to love them for what they teach us. And they had continued to do this for so long a time that on the day when that desire could no longer be restrained, it



Tours (xiv Century). Corbel. (*Old cathedral.*)

changed the axis of life, revealed life to itself, and finally stifled it. There was such an overflowing of forms, men were so drunk with sensations, that not only was the Christian idea of purification annihilated, but the art which had come to protest against that idea was devoured. It died because it had satisfied, with too great a violence, the needs that had given it birth. In less than three hundred years the French mind followed the course that leads from Sens or from Noyon, from Notre Dame, from Chartres,

from Beauvais—from naked logic, unity, harmony, and the ever-present impulse of sobriety and strength, to Rheims, the magnificent, sensual orgy, and to Rouen, the frail and flamboyant death struggle. Sculpture,

Bourges (xiv Century). The Saved. (*Cathedral.*)

affixed to the walls at first, incorporated in the walls, later on, detached itself from the walls; and once the dissociation had begun, it accentuated itself rapidly, until the final anarchy. From the fourteenth century on, it expresses scarcely more than that which one finds in an individual portrait having such characteristics as penetration, health, cordiality, and self-confidence. And then the image maker knows too much, he handles his chisel with such ease that he can watch it toying

with the material, and the force that once governed his heart has entirely passed into his hand. The lines of the cathedral become complicated and entangled; they lose their meaning; its vaults are encumbered with supplementary ribbing which will soon be cut up into fragments by useless ornament. The cathedral disappears under the profusion of the detail, its supports are weakened by being hollowed out with carving; every day its solid parts are diminished and a greater risk of a collapse is incurred by making room for the great windows that were invading it more and more. When it had appeared, the world was dying of darkness, of solitude and silence; the cathedral revealed light, form, and tumult to the world, and was to die as a result.

Hence the explosive and transitory character of the French art of the Middle Ages. The cathedral had crutches, as Michelet said in his reproach. Its flying buttresses are so pure because they bear faithfully the weight of a world, as a century gathers the effort of a thousand years into a single effort. And so the cathedral has that aspect of improvisation which renders it so alive and which also gives it its appearance of fragility. When we think of the haste with which the work was done, we are tempted to think that the French people, suddenly aroused from sleep to enter upon the intoxication of life, dazzled with the daylight, overrun by innumerable images, and overflowing with energy and joy, had a premonition that, between the theocratic oppression which had reached its death struggle and the military oppression which was coming, it would barely have time to express, in tempestuous confusion, that which it had understood of Nature upon its first meeting with her since the death of the ancient gods.

When the cathedral was vanquished, at the same time with the Commune and for the same reasons, there

remained nothing—save itself—of the impulse from which it had come forth. The energy of the nation, at first enervated by its own growth, and then crushed under the renewed invasions and under what was perhaps the most atrocious misery that history has known —the energy of the nation gave way Nothing was

Bourges (xiii to xvi Century). The five portals of the cathedral.

left in France but the growing monarchy and Catholicism, which, by working upon the disheartened spirits of the people, was regaining the ground it had lost. The upper clergy, the representative of political Christianity, took possession of the cathedral in order to oppose the doctrinal Christianity of the regular clergy against the human Christianity of the people. It is, thanks to the people, that Catholicism profited by the blows which the Middle Ages had dealt it and

gained the fame for æsthetic greatness which has rendered it so alluring. It became for the future the sweet and terrible thing that we know, so powerful in its art, so powerful in its morality. It was diverse corresponding to the way in which it manifested itself in France, in Italy, in Flanders, in Spain, in Germany, or in England, and yet it was one in its dogma and in its authority. It was at once theological and popular, traditional and spontaneous, universal and national. Students have believed—the Catholic Church itself sincerely believed—that it had made the Occident of the thirteenth century in its own image. In reality, it was France and Europe, in the exaltation of their life, which, for one hundred and fifty years, caused Catholicism to assume their own appearance.

When St. Bernard, already anathematizing the stiff Romanesque sculpture which decorated the earlier temples, was at the same time combating the communal spirit and, in Abelard, condemning the spirit of the universities, he said, "so numerous and so astounding did the variety of the forms appear everywhere, that the monk is more tempted to study the marbles than his books and to meditate on these figures far more than on the law of God." The cathedral is Christian only for those who do not feel that all things human contain Christianity, and precede and survive it, as it is anti-Christian only for those who do not sense the way in which Christianity remains human.[1] The cathedral is human and traditional and revolutionary, and profoundly opposed to the principle of authority in

[1] Stated in the modern form, the problem is without meaning. People are still discussing as to whether the builders of the cathedral were not "anticlerical." When will they begin to understand that every rise of life in the breast of the masses shatters the dogma of yesterday, even when it celebrates it? Whether they are freemasons or not is of no importance. The image makers of the Middle Ages are not freethinkers. They are free instincts.

moral matters set forth by Christianity when it claimed to be definitively organized; we see this opposition in the way that Gothic art expressed moral ideas in the form most accessible to our senses and translated

Poitiers (Palais de Justice) (end of the XIV Century). Jeanne de Boulogne, detail.

into the language which is most purely that of the senses, the dogmas which affirm the majesty of pure spirit. It rehabilitates the nature of man, it rehabilitates nature itself in the world where he lives. It loves man for himself, weak and filled with an un-

bounded courage, and it describes his paradise with the trees, the waters, and the clouds which he sees when he raises his eyes or when he goes forth from the gates of his city; it tells of the vegetables full of earth and the fruits that are brought to him from the fields on market days by the domestic animals who share his lot.

The cathedral, indeed the whole art of the ogive, realizes for a moment the equilibrium between the virgin forces of the people and the metaphysical monument whose mold Christian philosophy had been preparing for a thousand years. But these forces break the mold when they have attained their full expansion. The masons and the image makers, in opposition to the Church, consecrate the entrance of the ever-dying and ever-renascent form of the world into our spirit and our flesh. The desire of the people sweeps on into its movement all the inert matter of the prohibitions and the formulas in which the mechanism of theocracy claims the right to imprison it. Undoubtedly, the clergy imposed on the decorators an obligation, which they, however, very cheerfully accepted—that of respecting in the images a rigorous hierarchy, an inflexible and symbolic method of writing, over the arrangement of which the Church kept surveillance; "the art alone belongs to the painter, the law to the Fathers," said the council of Nicea.[1] The council of Nicea was not aware that the art is everything and that the law without it is only an empty garment, for at the moment when art springs from the hearts of men it is passion, will, suffering, religion, justice, life. What did it matter, therefore, that the edifice was the cross, that the apse was the crown of thorns, that the choir was the head of Christ, that the fire of the stained

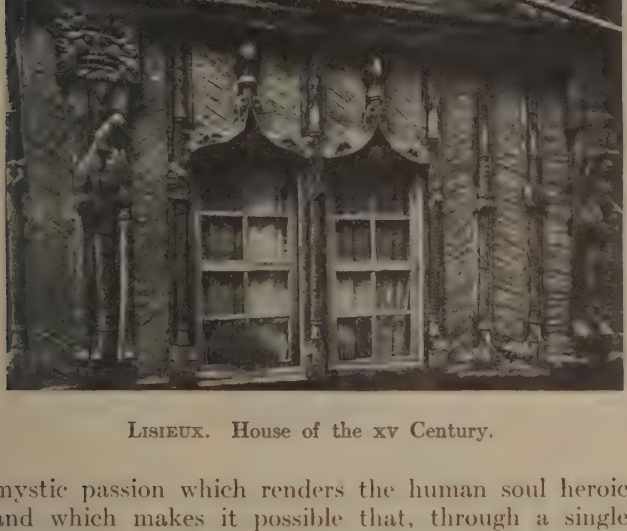
[1] For everything that concerns the external relationships in the art of the cathedrals, consult *L'Art Religieux du 13e Siècle en France*, by Émile Mâle.

AVIGNON (XIV Century). The palace of the Popes.

glass was celestial light, and that the towers were arms in prayer? The crowd in the Middle Ages expressed itself symbolically because the symbol summarized the higher moral realities which it did not discuss, so that it might remain the freer to discover its spiritual realities and because it found within itself an inexhaustible pretext for giving voice to the thing that was stifling it. In the Middle Ages, symbolism and theology were bound up with life, and their life was the real one; they were only one element in the formidable symphony in which all the forces of that period met, responded to each other and were associated one with another. Society, unconcerned as to the elements which constituted it, allowed its equilibrium and its activity to be organized spontaneously by the fiery life of these elements.

When we stand at a distance or on a height, it seems as if we could not apprehend the history of a great race save in the general characteristics which mark that race for us. It then seems to us to be contained entirely in one particular work and to take on a form that is, so to speak, visible or tangible, wherein all the adventures of its intelligence and its sorrow appear, as if sublimated. It seems to have lived, bled, carried on war and commerce, cultivated the soil, and wrought in iron, only that this work may be born, that it may contain, summarize, and exalt the obscure lives and the unformulated feeling of the billions of its living and its dead. And thereafter, each time that we evoke the spirit of a people, the name of a man who most obviously represents it in its most decisive hour comes to our lips. Beethoven brings us Germany, Shakespeare England, Michael Angelo Italy, Cervantes Spain, Rubens Flanders, Rembrandt the Netherlands. When we think of France, we hesitate. Montaigne is the hero of the eternal intelligence, standing above the

destiny of the peoples, above their language, above their passion. Pascal has not the divine joy that mounts with the blood of the people in its acts, even when these are the acts of injustice and despair. In those who have best told our story, Rabelais, La Fontaine, and Molière, there is lacking that kind of



Lisieux. House of the xv Century.

mystic passion which renders the human soul heroic and which makes it possible that, through a single man and at a single moment, there may be concentrated and epitomized within the human soul all the powers of life, which, at that particular moment, define for our eyes the course of destiny and of the world. Hugo puffs up his power with programs and sermons. Well then! the cathedral has everything we love in Hugo or Pascal; everything of ourselves that we find in Rabelais, Molière, or La Fontaine; everything that, in Montaigne, rises above time and place.

But by its vaults and by its towers it elevates all this in so lyrical a passion, that it lifts the French crowd up to the supreme conceptions which the greatest of our artists have almost never attained.

The French hero is the cathedral.

LUBECK

Chapter VIII. THE EXPANSION OF THE FRENCH IDEA

I

THE "French miracle" was such a miracle indeed, that it stupefied the people of the cities and compelled the poor of the countryside to come as often as they were able to see, rising higher every year above the slopes of the tiled roofs and the sharp gables, the blue and gold embroidery of the painted stones, the blood of the stained glass glowing in the light, and the massive or tapering sweep of the towers and the spires that vibrated with the throb of the bronze. Their work done, the masons and image makers looked upon it with as much astonishment as if they had come from the other end of the world to

view it. Each one had labored in his workshop, had made fast a window, had cut a statue, or erected his wall — stone on stone; each one had seen only a leaf or a blade of grass in the forest; many had died, even, without raising their eyes from the bud that had grown under their hands, from the fruit whose ripening they had guarded and not always had the time to gather. And now that the scaffolding was removed, and the trestles were torn down, here were tall, solemn vaults, rays of light in cataracts, a slender mountain of columns and statues filling the familiar heavens. Whence came this formidable unity in which the presence of faith, of hope, of the living god who dwelt in the heart of the crowds affirmed itself without anyone, not even the master builder who had made the plan for the edifice, dreaming of expressing it? Not one of them knew that it pre-existed in him, not one of them knew that his own humility and his neighbor's and his own weakness and his neighbor's — proceeding in the same direction, at the same pace, and with the same rhythm — were fusing more and more each day to bring forth the huge, anonymous power which should burst upon history as the highest manifestation of collective idealism. When they turned to view their work not one of them remembered that he had set his hand to it, but they knew that that way was paradise.

And so people came from the country, and even from a greater distance. They came to see, they came to take lessons, they came to ask the master builders to cross the sea or the mountains at the expense of the rich cities, all of which wanted to have the most beautiful church or the highest rampart. For two centuries, moreover, France had been the great hearth of the Occident. Through the Normans, it had conquered Sicily and England; under the ingenuous and powerfully stimulating pretext of delivering the Holy

Sepulcher, it was incessantly sending forth colonizing expeditions to the Orient, covering Syria, Greece, and the islands with French settlements, and attempting to occupy Egypt and northern Africa. French barons were wearing the crowns of Athens, of Constantinople,

England (xii Century). Lincoln Cathedral.

of Cyprus, and of Jerusalem. There emanated from the French soul that energy for expansion which permitted it each year, at a hundred points in France, to dig canals, to build bridges, aqueducts, and fountains, to open hospitals and schools, and to hang the pointed vaults, in majestic flight, a hundred feet from the soil. As it was to teach the world, five hundred years later, that the revelation of monarchy was outlived, so it ingenuously and joyously denounced theological revelation by sowing action, life, experience, and liberty everywhere.

Where the military men were unable to gain an entrance, thought still would penetrate by means of the merchants and the artists. On all the rivers of Europe, boats were carrying the material and the thought of the West. French romances sped all over the world. Almost all the heads of the foreign universities had passed through the University of Paris, where the nations maintained permanent colleges. Philippe Chinard, the French master builder, followed Frederick II everywhere. Charles of Anjou had called another, Pierre d'Angicourt, to Sicily. St. Louis, prisoner of the Saracens and spiritual king of the earth, was accompanied to Palestine by Eudes de Montereau, who fortified Jaffa. After the great Guillaume de Sens had broken his legs by a fall from the scaffolding in the nave of Canterbury, a hundred others had answered the call from foreign communes or vestry boards. Martin Ragevy and Villard de Honnecourt built churches in distant parts of Hungary. Companies of masons left for Germany. A master builder of Troyes built the temples, convents, castles, and commanderies of Cyprus. Mathieu d'Arras, who made the plans for the cathedral and the bridge of Prague, came from Avignon. The greater part of the Spanish cities, in the fourteenth century, called in French architects. Others went as far as Poland, and even Finland. The Benedictines, the Dominicans, and the Cistercians, above all, founded houses and orders that spread the vital thought over Europe. The Order of the Templars, the Order of Calatrava, and the Teutonic Order spread with a continuous activity in which, from one end of Christendom to the other, men recognized for an hour their sole and puissant hope. The great moral unity of Catholicism everywhere took on the appearance which the social idealism of the French communes irresistibly imposed on it.

Almost everywhere, at least in the beginning, the master builders would bring a first plan inspired by Amiens, or Rheims, or Chartres, or Notre Dame, or Beauvais. But the building of a cathedral often went

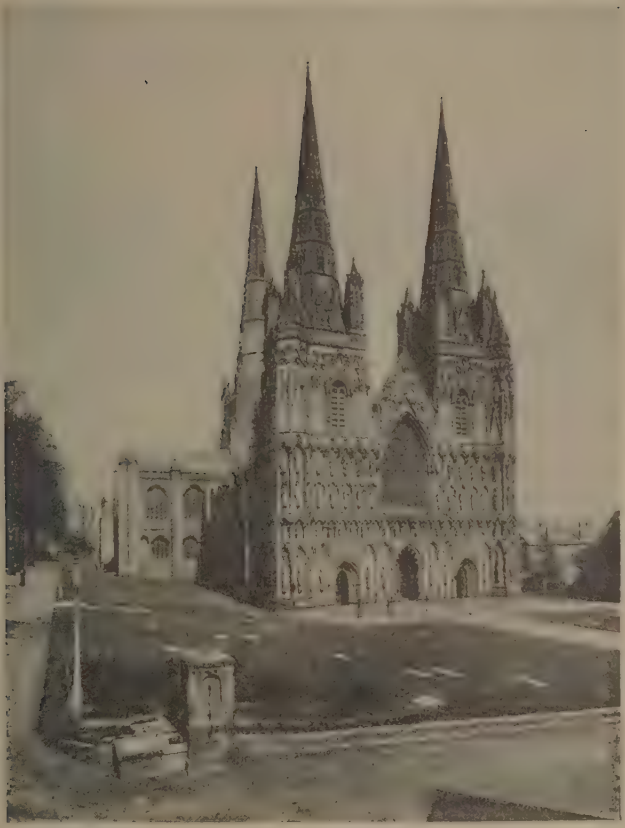
ENGLAND (XI and XII Centuries). Ely Cathedral.

on for two or three centuries, native architects succeeded the French masters, the masons, and image makers, who were recruited in increasing numbers from the local corporations, took root in their soil. The sky

and its sun and its clouds, the surrounding plain, the bare or woody mountain that rose at the gates of the city and the age-old forces established in the race by the regime of the seasons, by the nature of the work done in the country, its trade, peace, war, and food—all took form, little by little, in the profile of the naves and of the towers, in the disposition of the bays, in the transparence of the stained glass, and in the projections which distributed light and shadow on the front of the monuments. But the fact that the style was originally a borrowed one was always a drawback to the work; never, or hardly ever, did any town or country again have the impulse from which, for an hour, there issued forth the spontaneous agreement of the French crowd with the enthusiastic creation and the logic of the artisans who expressed it.

II

England, however, barely missed participating in the miracle at the same time with northern France, when the latter country lived through that moment which, until then, has never occurred more than once in the history of a people and which France, the India of the Middle Ages, and the Ancient Empire of Egypt alone have known. England discovered the ogive at the same time that we did, if not some years earlier. Why, therefore, could she not, by making use of those powerful faculties for generalization of which, from Roger Bacon to Newton, she has given as great a proof as we have from Abelard to Lamarck—why could she not systematize the use of the ogive, hang the stones of her soil in the air between two diagonal lines of ribbing, articulate the gigantic limbs of the great body, and cause the flying buttresses to rise from



ENGLAND (XIII Century). Litchfield Cathedral.

the pavement of the cities as if to support the weight of the towers?[1]

It was because the English cathedral was principally the luxury of a certain class of society, because it did not translate one of those surges of idealism in which the French crowd sometimes offers a meeting place—for ten years, for a month, for an hour—to the poor and the rich, to those who do nothing, and to those who work, to those who suffer, and to those who are happy. As in France, to be sure, the English middle class had, in the eleventh century, secured the rights that were confirmed by Magna Charta in 1215. But in order to maintain these rights it was not obliged to struggle constantly as did our communes, which were menaced incessantly by the Church and the barons. In the freedom of the English commune, the solidarity of the social organs was not so necessary, and the fierce pride of the corporations, which the political powers always treated on the footing of equality, set them up one against the other without danger to themselves. The cathedral was an expression of the wealth they had in common and not of their brotherhood.

It is egoistic, exclusive, and close to the great current of humanity; its formula is stiff and dry, seldom animated—and then always timidly—by the confused and swarming life of the bas-reliefs and the statues through which the French artisans brought to the framework of society, like fruits on an altar, the tribute of their love. For five hundred years the aristocratic arts of priests and soldiers had been carried on in the shelter of the ramparts of the military strongholds and the walls of the monasteries of these mystic islands, and

[1] And why did she send over to France for Guillaume de Sens if this builder, and perhaps the architect of Saint-Denis, were not the first in Europe to use the broken arch as the determining principle of the whole architecture of the ogive?

from such arts nothing of the people, or of life itself, could come forth. Ireland, with its dripping humidity buried under its green leaves, could not pass on to England, when transmitting Christianity to that country, anything more than the miniatures patiently composed in its monasteries while the eternal rain

ENGLAND (XIII Century). Exeter Cathedral, the nave.

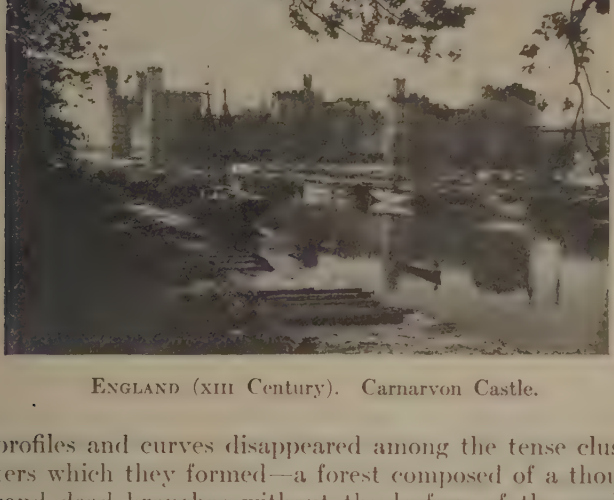
drenched the windowpanes. The weapons of the Saxons, the carved prows of the Scandinavian barks, and the importations from Byzantium were only so many separate elements for which the flame of a homogeneous people, that could weld them into a unified force, was lacking. When the Normans arrived they appropriated the Roman tradition imported from France in the course of previous centuries, and built many powerful churches in which a square and crenelated tower rose from the center of the nave, as if to impress upon the mind the idea of military domination. But they were camping on British soil. They were to

furnish to the English people only the unshakable foundation of temples and strongholds. Cathedrals, abbeys, castles, ramparts, illuminated manuscripts, funerary statues of alabaster—all was an art of the classes, from the beginning until the hour when Shakespeare frees and spreads over the world the torrent of emotions and images sealed up in the heart of the crowd by all those somber stones and those carved sepulchers.

As one descends the valley of the Seine, the spires that appear above the towers become sharper and frailer. In Normandy, the life that creeps about the side of the French cathedrals and thoroughly imbues them with movement, becomes fixed and already tends to lose movement, even while it becomes slighter and more abundant, while the mass becomes airy and is cut into more and more by openings. The mighty poem of the people becomes complicated, mannered, and inclines toward the attributes of the art object. We are midway between the social art of France and the stiff rich monument, that we see when the mist rises, lifting above the lawns and the trees the symmetrically pointed spires and the parapets of the central tower that weighs heavily upon the long, low nave. Already at Rouen and at Coutances the tower is placed over the cross of the transept. And if the living decoration of the French provinces still animates the Norman churches, their sharply cut and voluntary movement gives us a foretaste of the geometrical decoration of England.

The diadem raised by the merchants of the British Isles above their rude industrial cities seemed to be made by the hands of goldsmiths and, in contrast with the enthusiasm expressed in the monuments which on the other side of the Channel derive their life from the houses and the fields in order to exalt it, the English cathedral is very obviously conceived as a proud hom-

age to the emancipation of a hard and egoistic class. Whereas wings spread out above the naves of the Continental churches in which the vibrant columns rose from the soil, here a wooden roof supported by corbels dominated the low naves, which were arrested on all sides by implacable horizontals. Often, tight sheaves of parallel ribbing choked all the lines of the nave whose



England (xiii Century). Carnarvon Castle.

profiles and curves disappeared among the tense clusters which they formed—a forest composed of a thousand dead branches without the leafage of the vault and without space and without air above them. In the apse, where the French builder allowed the darkness to deepen, where the wall was rounded like a cradle about the living god that it inclosed so lovingly, the wall fell away like a portcullis, permitting the light to pass through the straight-lined colonnades as if they were iron railings.

The supreme expression of the English ogival style,

the perpendicular, appeared at the time when, among us, the flame of stone, crackling as it launched skyward, was announcing the last flicker of the exhausted life around which a fatal twilight was rapidly gathering. On the one hand we have the end of a dream, on the other an affirmation of the will; on one side the abrupt

GERMANY (XI Century). Cathedral of Speyer.

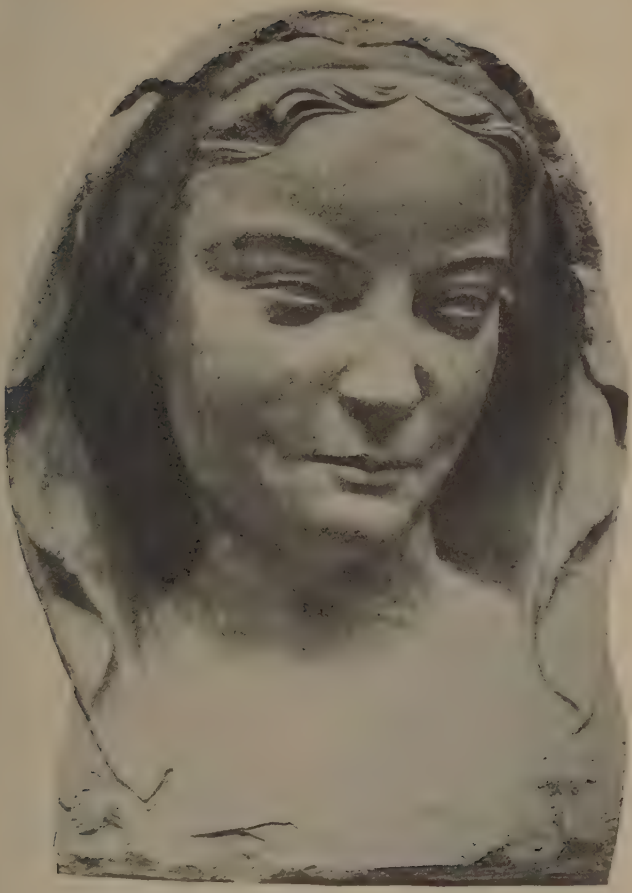
dissociation of the social forces, the defeat that comes day by day, even as man's illusions recommence each day, the mad charges, the feverish plunging of a civilization at the point of death—and on the other side the concentration of all the means of conquest: method in warfare, a definite goal to attain, victory, the practiced and steady rigor of a civilization that is determining and establishing itself. Whereas on the one side there is no longer anything more than ruins or abandoned works, we find pinnacles arising on the other side and spires shooting upward, the wrinkled façades that appear to be made of frost and glass,

Alsace (xii and xiii Centuries). Strassburg Cathedral.

and the close-set latticed tracery of stone stalactites. For the spectral, aërial, and vague poetry of the English people to have its full effect in these icy and magnificent monuments, one should see them under a blue veil of moonlight or see the sharp spires rising out of the wet leaves and the mist. The art of the north demands the complicity of the vapor that spreads through space, of the foliage, of the sleeping water, and the uncertain illumination of the night. The rectangular manor houses lift up above the lakes the formidable profile of their polygonal towers, and as we view them we feel their whole bulk, and yet something more than their bulk, weighing upon the sinister history of the Middle Ages in England. They would not become a part of the mighty dream of this people—whose will has all the power that dwells in the lines of its towers, a people as resistant as their walls, this people whose soul, when it peers to its depths, is as steeped in fog and moonlight as they are themselves—they would not become a part of the dream of England, I repeat, if a mantle of ivy did not cover them from top to bottom, if blood did not filter between their stones, and if the echo of falling axes were not heard when one traverses their black corridors, where wandering specters brush by one in passing. The soul of the north has not been able to define itself by the visible lines of the world; and only poetry and music are vague enough to receive it in their embrace.

III

The sea with its ebb and flow carries the thought from one shore to the other. England, which owed so much to the Scandinavians, in its turn carried Anglo-Norman art to Norway, whereas Sweden, whither Etienne Bonneuil had come with his companions from



Alsace (xiii Century). Strassburg Cathedral, a face.

France at the end of the thirteenth century, to build the cathedral of Upsala, received a mingling of German and French architecture by way of the Baltic. Indirectly, it is still French art that fertilizes the eastern slope of the northern peninsula, for German art came in a straight line from the masons of Champagne, of Ile-de-France, and of Picardy.

That is not to say that Germany had not attempted repeatedly, from the darkest moments of the Middle Ages onward, to create a national art for herself from the elements which she received from without, or that she evolved from within. Charlemagne had created a mixed civilization—Ancient, Byzantine, Germanic, and Christian—whose plastic expression has practically disappeared. It was the work of monks and scribes, a crude and false thing that had to die. When the Romanesque appeared it found, on the contrary, a social and political soil perfectly adapted to give to it a very powerful, clear-cut, and pure character. The Holy Roman Empire, the clergy, and the feudal lords meet there for an hour and bind those enormous stones with a moral cement so hard that it did not seem possible that mystic and warlike Germany would ever cease building the red walls that are stained by the rain and seldom animated by statues. As a matter of fact, it was late when she ceased, and she did so with bad grace. And when Bohemia desired a national architecture and sought solid materials for it near-by, it was in the nervous and sober combination of the massive German Romanesque and of the French ogival style that she found the formula for her art. The temples on the banks of the Rhine combined round and octagonal forms in the apses, in the transepts, in the four towers at the corners, and in the short curved steeples. Doubtless, they never expressed the living emotion of a people any more than did the other archi-

tectural forms of Germany; they expressed the power of the affiliated military and religious castes, who nevertheless recognized the spontaneous expression of the popular classes, faithfully and strictly disciplined. The real soul of the German crowds was never in the stone. The men of this period, who revealed the German soul to the future, were the wandering minstrels who sang the tale of the Nibelungen as, later on, it was to be heard in the voice of the master singers of the industrial cities and the hero musicians of the hours of hope or of despair —Luther, Sebastian Bach, Beethoven, and Richard Wagner. The German cathedral is forever being built up and pulled down. "A few men come together; suddenly cries ring out from all their breasts and float above them; anon the sounds have found their echoing form in aërial vaults for which all the hearts are pillars. And when the men are no longer assembled, the cathedral has disappeared.

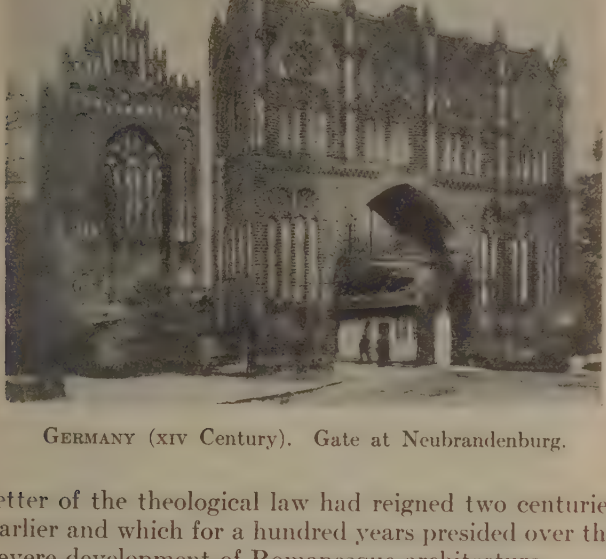
GERMANY (XIII Century). Cathedral of Naumburg, Countess Baba.

Despite the Hansa, despite the league of the Rhine towns, despite the wealth of the free cities of Germany whose rise was assisted by the struggle, in the thirteenth century, between the Pope and the Emperor, despite the strength of the Teutonic Order which covered Bavaria and the Sieben Gebirge with square towers flanked with sharp-pointed watchtowers, Germany of the Middle Ages had no original architecture.[1] The German cathedral does not resemble the living monuments of the French provinces or the marvelous goldsmith architecture of England or the mighty markets of Flanders or those accumulations of stone over shadowy depths in which we get a gleam of gold, as in the Spanish churches. It remains quite itself by the pedantic complications of its lines, the tangle of its ribbing, its stiffness, and its bristling, narrow, and metallic movement. But it is especially when it frees itself from the formula which it extracted little by little from the ogival edifices of Picardy and Burgundy that it almost invariably sacrifices its law of internal structure to the abstract and confused sentimentalism of the ornamented surfaces.

It was the wise and foolish virgins of the French portals who came to Strassburg to bring the good news to Germany. The definite balance of ensemble and the grace of the smiling statues in which, however, there is already the mark of the good-natured sentimentalism of the Teutons would not have surprised a master builder of the valley of the Seine. But the hard red façade, with its resemblance to rusty iron, already showed the tendencies of the German style through the abundance and the stiffness of the vertical lines, the long, pious parallels, the dry spindling forms of the

[1] The cathedral of Cologne, which was for so long a time considered the type and the masterpiece of Gothic architecture, is a turgid, thin, and dry amplification of the cathedral of Amiens.

colonnettes, and despite the magic life of the whole work which reminds one of a windowpane in winter when it is enriched by the fern shapes of the frost. Such a building was the necessary step between the mighty animation of Amiens, of Rheims, of Notre Dame de Paris, and the dogmatism of Cologne in which the



GERMANY (XIV Century). Gate at Neubrandenburg.

letter of the theological law had reigned two centuries earlier and which for a hundred years presided over the severe development of Romanesque architecture.

When the German cities had associated themselves to regulate the movement of all the treasures of Europe, the cloths of Flanders, the wines of France, the spices of the Orient brought by ships to the mouth of the Rhine and transported along its tributaries to the center and heart of the Teutonic continent, when by reason of the foreign war between the Papacy and the

Empire, the currents of activity that circulated everywhere had brought to all the cities workmen from the Rhenish provinces, French image makers, wood carvers from the Black Forest, and bronze workers that the

GERMANY (XIV Century). Rathaus of Stralsund.

honest and powerful Roman school of Bishop Bernward of Hildesheim had been educating for two centuries, a fertile mingling of all these confused forces developed in the German soil the revelation of its desires. To be exact, the process went on for a century,

the thirteenth, during which the statue makers of Naumburg, before they reverted to the complication and the honest sentimentalism of German sculpture,

GERMANY (XIV Century). Cathedral of Ulm.

made a vigorous effort in the direction of the monumental style whose qualities of love, strength, and simplicity the masters of Rheims were at that moment revealing to France and to the world. But this cen-

tury sufficed to define the dominating tendencies of Gothic-building in Germany before the mind of the workman in the industrial cities had seized upon it and developed in it, with meticulous ingenuity and patience, the complications which, while it all contributed to lead architecture away from its true function, prepared Germany for the Renaissance by individualizing little by little its industries and crafts.

Beside the cathedrals of our northern provinces, square to the very base of their towers, established so powerfully on their horizontal lines and deriving all the elements of their incomparable lyrism from the life about them and from the need to fulfill a definite purpose, the German cathedral is subjective and confessedly sentimental; clearly, it aims to rise as high as possible at all costs and to attain its objects by abstract means. Everywhere we find hard lines mounting straight upward and giving all the more sweep to the edifice because its pyramidal form is indicated in them from the ground to the top of the spire that is planted full in the center of the façade, on a single tower which gathers together the elements of the ensemble in order to carry it still higher by prolonging the lines of the pointed steeples which shoot up from all sides. It was of German Gothic that those writers were thinking when they defined the Catholic architecture of the Middle Ages as an impetuous aspiration toward heaven. It is above all a moral aspiration, and it never attained so perfect an expression in balance of structure as to make it comparable with that which gives to the towers of Rheims their aërial lightness, to the old spire of Chartres its pure and infinite movement, and to the towers of Notre Dame or Amiens the tremendous power to lift the pavement of the cities to the very bosom of space where, every day of spring and summer and autumn, it is caressed by the gold of the last mo-

ments of the sunlight. It is a noble effort, none the less, a mighty and mystic elevation of human sentiment toward the poignant love for that unknown thing which the sense of life is, and which the great music

FLANDERS (XIII and XIV Centuries). The market of Ypres.

will stir up, in the depths of our hearts, five centuries later.

In the north of Germany, over which war passes less frequently, where the bare plains that descend to the seashore contrast with the overhanging rocks, the trailing mists of the Rhine, and the forests of black pines of the mountainous regions of Bavaria and Austria, where the most powerful Hanseatic cities of the Empire, Lubeck, Bremen, and Hamburg claimed the commerce of all northern Europe, from the counters of London and Bruges to the fairs of Nijni-Novgorod, the pyramidal thrust of the churches was far less wild.

Representing wholesale commerce and maritime life, the solid Rathauses were set up with walls as high as cliffs, lightened by circular openings between pointed turrets, to withstand the salt spray which forms a green coating on the copper steeples that rise above the red roofs. The blue-and-black coating of the bricks gave them an oily varnish, and the fishermen with their boots of seal hide, returning from the ice flows, found again their slaty sky, their greasy waters, and the dull luster of the tar on their boats. Here the soil and the water took architecture back to themselves, and the ogive restored its original significance by adapting it to its function.

More profoundly rooted than the great Catholic idea, as a result of which Europe was to be covered with temples that should be of the same type everywhere, the local use of the edifice, at least in the countries of very marked character, weighed down the idea until it touched the earth at every point. The Dutch, a practical, moderately idealistic, and spontaneously balanced people, preserved the essential principles of their first monuments until the period when, in Germany and in France, the growing complication of ogival architecture marked the end of mediæval society. The independence of Holland and the Reformation are announced by the bare naves, the massiveness and the roundness of the pillars which support them, and the sturdy gathered strength that is a quality of their mind, the mind of serious business men, of engineers, and of the solid soldiers that the Dutch make upon occasion. We see their quality everywhere—in the thick, low dikes that hurl back the sea, in the slow, full-bellied boats that come up to the heart of the pasture lands, as well as in the buildings of to-day which continue to embody the unshakable good sense of the Dutch amid the architectural anarchy of Europe.

Flanders is nearer the soil on which the cathedrals rose. There, from the end of the twelfth century onward, the cities of workmen where the trade in hides and woolens

FLANDERS (XIII to XV Century). Market and belfry of Bruges.

centered, where cloths were woven and dyed —Bruges and Ypres especially —built formidable markets whose vertical walls, pierced by two regular rows of windows, have the sureness that comes of necessity. They unhesitatingly express a categorical ideal, thanks to "a

century of friendship."[1] Here the admirable heroism of popular need triumphs over all narrow interests and belies the systems that endeavor to bring it back to an abstract, universal, and dogmatic form. Ogival art was so little the language of Christianity when the latter is stripped of everything which binds it to a given locality and to matter, that if its social expression in France assumed an externally religious form, the principle which it carried with it engendered commercial buildings in Flanders, as, in the Italian city, it brought forth sober fortresses and proud municipal palaces. The Flemings built these also, to be sure, but it was to defend their warehouses and their looms. Their finest monuments were born of their mercantile spirit, as the finest Italian monuments were born of the passionate individualism which characterizes Italy, and as the finest French monuments sprang from the social idealism which has been the life of France and which passes, through Rabelais and Diderot, from the Gothic cathedral to the Revolution.

IV

Perhaps in all Europe during the Middle Ages of Christianity, mystic Spain was the only country that was unable to attain the summarized architectural expression of the desire of its multitudes. Two centuries of incessant warfare between the natives and the Moors, a violent confusion of races and languages, a soil cut up by ravines, by mountains, and by inaccessible plateaus which stony deserts isolated one from another, were enough to prevent a collective soul from defining itself there. Spain underwent the influence of Roman architecture, Arab architecture, Romanesque

[1] Michelet, *Histoire de France.*

SPAIN (XIII Century). Cathedral of Avila.

architecture, and French architecture, one after the other, until the hour of political unity revealed her to herself, but too late for her to escape the influences of nascent European individualism, which at least encouraged her to release the brutal and subtle energy that she possessed even though she did not recognize

Spain (xv Century). Façade of the palace of Guadalajara.

it. For four hundred years the little Christian monarchies of her northern provinces had to send for the architects and sculptors of France, of Burgundy, of Germany, and the Netherlands to build and decorate the alcazars and the churches. The sculptors of the school of Toulouse invaded Castile, Galicia, Navarra, and Catalonia whither, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the image makers and the architects of the valley of the Seine repaired in their turn. In the sixteenth century, in the full tide of the Renaissance, when Italy was already pressing upon her through her

SPAIN (XIII to XV Century). Cathedral of Burgos.

Mediterranean provinces, Spain was still calling in French and Burgundian masters.

From the time when the Cistercians and the Clunisians introduced Romanesque sculpture into Spain, the art, upon contact with this people that loves picturesque projections and brutal contrasts of light and shade, assumed a character of exuberance and of decorative profusion in which architectural line was lost. It was in vain that the hell which caused the capitals and tympanums to bristle with monstrous beasts retreated before the invasion of the saints and the Virgin which the French image makers brought with them when the building guilds in France were too rich in workmen to employ them for the construction and decoration of the churches. The native pupils of the visiting artisans were men of a different type: half-warriors, half-peasants, whom the fire of the sky had rendered as hard as their flints, and who chopped away the trees so as to have no shade in which to cool their blood; such men could not accommodate the mystic fever that consumed them to the profiles of the churches whose sculptured stone lent animation to the work without in any way impairing its power, even as an undulation passes over the mass of leaves at the edge of a forest. At the same time the memory of the Moorish leather workers, armorers, and goldsmiths pursued them at their labors. They chiseled stone as though it were a metal that one can cast, twist, and emboss from within. When Gil de Siloe, the fifteenth-century master, received the manifold heritage from the French statue makers, from the Spaniards whom they had educated, and from the Berber decorators who sawed the lacework of the paneling and the railings of the mosques out of wood —the tombs and the altar screens, enormous jewels of the lapidary which came from his hands, seemed to be incrusted with gems and to bristle with stal-

actites; they were fluted and warty like an embossed copper.

When Spain had only Granada to recapture from the Moors, when the dust and the rocks of the peninsula had been reunited under the Catholic scepter, there was really an hour when, if moral fellowship was not

SPAIN. Mausoleum at Miraflores, by Gil de Siloe

attained in order to reach great architecture at a single bound, there was, at least, a fever that infected the whole land in common; something funereal, cruel, and frenzied fired all the somber hearts and spurted forth from them like jets of blood thickened with black clots, like furious torrents of gold and stones. What need there was for order and harmony! The naves built by the French and the mosques built by the Mussulmans were torn open so that in the middle of them, between gratings of gold, a choir filled with golden

ornaments might be installed, a mountain of gold that gleams in the shadows. Without the lamps it would have been impossible to see the clothed idols, the crucified corpses with the bleeding knees, or the crust of gold which covered the tangled ribbing of the vaults, or the night that swallows up everything. The golden orgy of the Flemish altar screens encumbers the whole nave, enormous golden staircases descend into the churches which are crushed by heavy lacework of stone. Here is a forest of heavily built belfries, here are thick traceries of closely worked embroidery in which the flame of the Gothic twists like an arabesque and under which the Arab arch breaks the ogival arch and causes it to become round and undulating. Here is an ocean of enervated sculptures wherein the most mystic of peoples offers the fearful testimony of its submission to the purposes of the most mystic of centuries. We are made to think of the crackling of the fires that burn victims at the stake, of their charred bodies, and of the frightful immolation of the human being to the savage powers that he can neither control nor understand and obey.

Between the sublime instinct of the crowds who accepted all the symbols so as to permit their creative force to reach its goal without weakening, and the newborn reason of the individuals who discussed all the symbols in order that they might try to penetrate the mystery of nature, there was a separation that tore men's flesh, and it was here that the expression of this tragic period reached its apogee of confusion and disorder. Spain must have felt that she was born to the collective life too late and that she was no longer in time to be the first to expound the shaken idea of Catholicism; and it was perhaps because of remorse over the fact that she had not lived it through until after the others had done so, that she remained attached

SPAIN (end of the XV Century). Detail of the façade of San Gregorio at Valladolid.

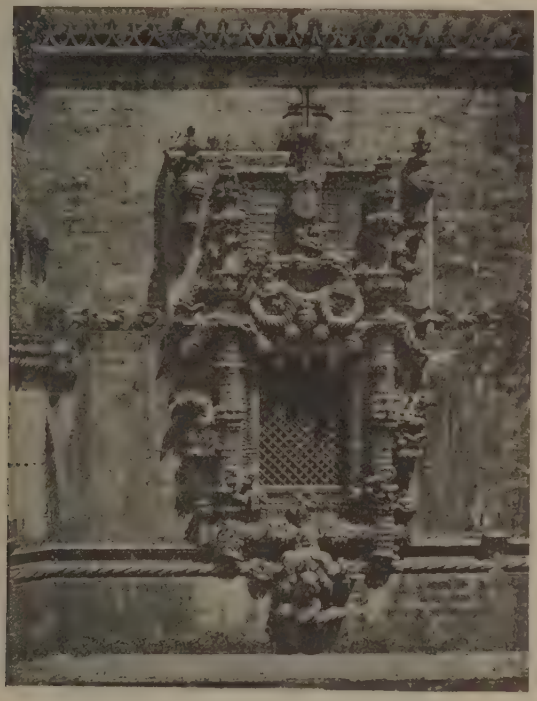
to it the most fiercely of all, and that she was the last. In her fever, she heaped up all the stones wrought by the sculptors who, for five hundred years, had been living on her lean flanks, the Visigoths, the French, the Flemings, the Germans, the Moors, the Jews, and the Iberians, and it was with furor that she affirmed her

PORTUGAL (XIV and XV Centuries). Façade of the chapel of Batalha.

irreducible fanaticism at the hour when the workmen of the north, in the countries torn by war, were confessing their despair.

However, nothing was lost. Man, goaded by doubt, was commencing once more his climb toward the inaccessible summit. While the last masons were setting the last and the highest spires over the last and the highest naves, there sallied forth from a port of that same Spain three caravels that were to plunge into the west. In barely a hundred and fifty years, at a time

when there were no other roads than the rivers, when the cities were surrounded by walls, when several months of dangerous navigation were needed to go



Portugal (xvi Century). Window of the abbey of Thomar.

from the coasts of France to the coasts of the Levant, the thing which had enabled the men of the Middle Ages to establish over the whole of Europe one of the densest and yet one of the most coherent and deeply

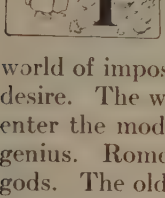
rooted civilizations in history—their obscure solidarity —was now suddenly expanding as if the life of a too-powerful body had burst its armor, as if its blood, its glance, and its thought were spreading on all sides through the rifts in the metal. The Portuguese architects were already asking the great mariners, who were colonizing Africa and India, to tell them how the Indians decorated their temples, and to bring back to them from their voyages the things that they would group in the last flowerings of Moorish art and of ogival art: keels, anchors, cables, the fauna and flora of the seas, octopuses, madripores, corals, and shells. . . . The conquest of the sea and the sky was to cause the spirit to leap when once it was stripped of its ancient beliefs, and bring it to the threshold of new intuitions where new beliefs elaborate themselves little by little.

YPRES

Assisi

Chapter IX. THE MISSION OF FRANCIS OF ASSISI

I



ITALY did not know the centuries of silence into which the annihilation of the Latin world plunged Gaul. Visited, as Gaul was, and more frequently than Gaul, by invasion, Italy retained, nevertheless, the memory of a well-ordered world of imposing aspect, one which resembled her own desire. The world of the ancient Mediterranean was to enter the modern world along the slope of her natural genius. Rome installed in the basilicas its rebaptized gods. The old races called upon the old civilizations to furnish them the means of awaiting the return of life.

The Barbarians overthrew the temples, their Italianized sons set them up again. And nothing is changed. From the ruin of yesterday still another basilica comes forth. The role of the conqueror is not to teach new

processes, but to infuse new energy. He offers his virgin senses to the revelation of the glorious landscape. Thus was Greece rendered fecund by the Dorians. New generalizations are born from the melting of the

Lucca (xi Century). The cathedral.

human material from the north in the Greco-Latin crucible.

We know it well. We must tell it. The greatest men have confessed it to us. Montaigne will ask Italy to approve his wisdom, Shakespeare invokes her name daily to justify his passion. Goethe lives through her,

and Stendhal, and Nietzsche. Byron dies through her. In the days of Rembrandt's affluence, Giorgione reigns over his studio, and when he becomes poor there is always something of the Italian flame at the center of the ray of light which follows his descent into the shadows of the mind. It is Italy that organizes the

SIENA (XII and XIII Centuries). Fonte Branda.

tumult of Rubens, that reveals space to Velasquez, to Poussin the architecture of the earth, to Claude Lorrain the architecture of the sky. As soon as one touches Italy, one feels oneself overwhelmed by the intoxication that comes of understanding. Intelligence and instinct merge, the scientist agrees that the artist shall take possession of mechanics and of geometry, the artist willingly grinds the colors and mixes the mortar. The most atrocious voluptuousness is only a step from sainthood; chastity burns like an orgy. Here love is as funereal as death; death has the attraction and the

mystery of love. The ambition to dominate increases the thirst for conquest and knowledge, and yet knowledge and conquest are never definitive enough to make him who desires them worthy to command. Here pride is so strong that it will invariably abase itself before the things it still must learn in order that, with them, it may affirm itself before the world. Nowhere do crime and genius approach so closely to each other. Cain and Prometheus may be divined in the curve of every brow, in the depths of all eyes, and in all the hands that clutch the handle of the dagger or the tool of the workman. The earth trembles, and yet one feels something eternal in the profile of these mountains and the curve of these shores. Everywhere in Italy the world incorporates the mind with its form, and demands insatiably that the passion of men's hearts shall tear it forth. Italy! There is something that pains in the love that we have for you; we are afraid that we shall never know fully what you desire to teach us.

The potential force which is there must impose itself despite everything. Byzantium itself contributes less than is generally believed. Save at Ravenna, a colony of the Greek empire, save at Venice, where the Orient lives, save in Sicily, a Greek country where the Byzantine elements mingle with the Arab and Norman elements developing, in the Middle Ages, a voluptuous, cruel, paradoxical, and barbarous style that is impossible to define and difficult to recognize, Byzantium does not furnish Italy with a single idea which, on being transplanted, can originate a new architectural order. Italy accepts the cupola only because it already covers the Pantheon. In the middle of the thirteenth century, when the French image makers, the masters of Occidental sculpture, are in demand everywhere, Nicola Pisano studies Roman sarcophagi to learn the working of marble; he cuts, as if with a hatchet, his

San Gimignano (xiii Century). Palace of the Podesta.

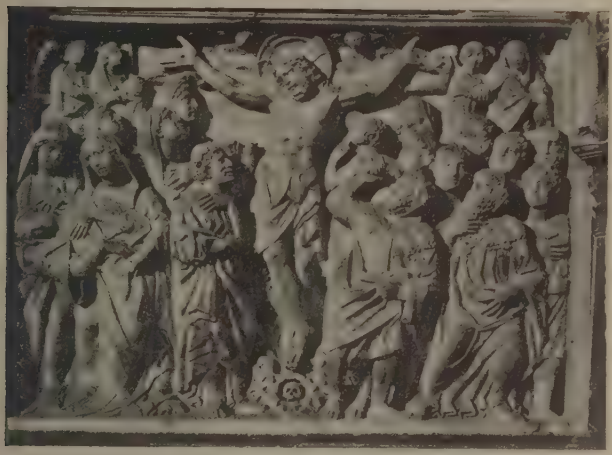
crowds of figures, glowing with life, rough and tense from brutal effort; and so he sets up the trenchant claim of the primitive Latin genius as opposed to the claims of the artists of the north. Italy does nor forget, because she remains Italy.

Too often people look upon the perpetuation of certain essential forms as the result of a traditional

VOLTERRA (XIII to XV Century). Fortress.

desire transmitted by the schools, when in reality the forms are only an expression of the desires of a race and of the indications of its soil. In all the Mediterranean countries, where palm trees, pines, and yew trees detached their smooth trunks against a hard sky, the column which reappears on the front of the churches and which is used from the top to the bottom of the towers of Romanesque Italy was a natural expression that could not disappear. Antiquity and the new Italy are in accord in these lines of galleries bordered by arcades which spread their carved tracery over the round baptisteries, the bare façades of the

temples, and the square campaniles. The basilica has called to its aid the trees whose clearly marked foliage allows the transparence and the limpidity of the world to shine through their overhanging branches, and it is



NICOLA PISANO. The Crucifixion, bas-relief. (*Baptistery of Pisa.*)

with their grace and pride that it covers the great Roman vessel.

The daily needs and the riches of Italy required this architecture. The image of her powerful cities and her villas, scattered over the sides of the hills among the cypresses, is imprinted on the hearts of those who cannot forget the educating power of her severe and melodious contours; it is in the hearts of all those who retain the clear memory of the white arcades and of the sheathings of black and white marble which from afar mingle the cathedrals with the blurred reds of the roofs. At the hour when the theocratic Romanesque was defining architectural

dogma in the north and west of Europe, Pisa and Lucca and many other cities of continental Italy were already passing beyond the towers and the temples to the popular expression that suited the Italians, as the

Treviso (1310). San Nicola.

French Commune was to pass on, a century later, to the popular expression that suited the French. The Italian Romanesque derives from the living spirit of the race with perfect ease. Italy will not have to rise up throughout its whole extent, as the north of France had to, in order to claim the right to assert its vision.

CIMABUE. Madonna with angels and Saint Francis of Assisi, fresco.
(*Lower Church, Assisi.*)

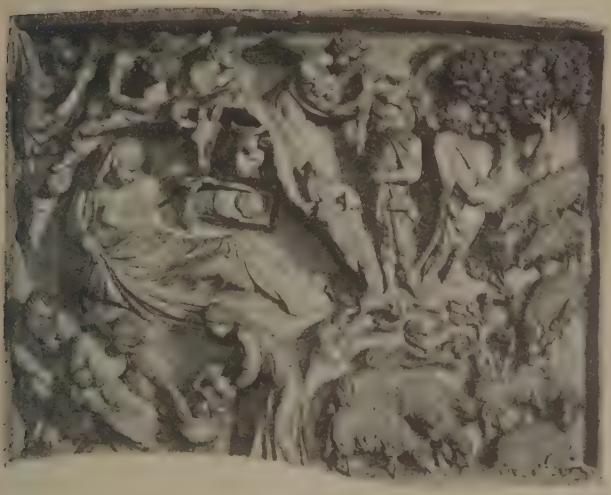
Catholicism here never ceased to employ external magnificence as an expression of political domination, which, if it does not leave freedom of thought to man, at least permits him complete freedom of sensation. The gallery with colonnades defines the church and the loggia, and the city house and the country house which the Tuscans and Lombards would still be building to-day, had they been left to their own devices. Along the streets paved with their broad flagstones, it is still the gallery with colonnades that shelters the crowd from showers and sun, and supports the pink or white façades whose rows of green shutters rise to the line of the roof. Under the pines shaped like parasols, it is the gallery that detaches its profiles against the straight-lined terraces of the Florentine villas. And at the gates of the cities, it protects the cool Campo Santo, paved with marble, where one walks over the dead.

II

In contrast with what occurred at the decline of the ancient civilizations, life reappeared in the north of the country. The south had not been so deeply plowed by the successive invasions. The Norman barons, in southern Italy, had had to defend themselves against a climate very different from their own and against a race that had been enervated by an effort reaching back farther into the past than did that of continental Italy. Moreover, they asked the protection of the Pope in repressing the conquered provinces. The whole of the feudal organization was used in breaking down the activity of the native population.

In the north, on the contrary, the cities profited by the struggle between the Pope and the Emperor in order to gain their autonomy and to fortify it by a system of alternative alliances with one or the other of

the two powers that were fighting for the domination of Italy. Guelphs and Ghibellines, Blacks and Whites, Pisa, Florence, Lucca, Siena, Parma, Modena, Bergamo, Mantua, Milan, Pavia, and Cremona, took now the one standard and now the other, to live their life



Giovanni Pisano. Nativity. (*Museum of Pisa.*)

of incessant warfare either under the cross of the Church or under the flag of the Empire. They had, indeed, to choose between death—at a moment when the passion for living was rising in floods—and a life which depended for its strength upon active vigilance, unwearying curiosity, and a continuous physical and moral effort. Hence, the energy of the Italian Republic, out of which the modern mind has evolved, whether we like to admit it or not.

If, amid all these rival cities which were ready to fall

upon one another on the morrow of their violent reconciliations, the rise of Florence was the most violent—to the point of absorbing Tuscany in two centuries, of playing a mighty role in the life of Europe, and of inscribing herself upon our memory with lines of steel—it was because she was at the crossing of the roads

MONTEPULCIANO (XIV Century). Cathedral.

that connect Rome with Germany and that connect the two seas which border the peninsula. The whole commercial, military, and moral life of the Italy of the Middle Ages traversed her. The grace and the vigor of the country that surrounds her were to make of her senses, tense and burnt by fever, the natural mold into which life was poured that it might be cast into well-characterized and clear images. We must remember that Tuscany, when it called itself Etruria, had already played a role in history analogous to this one. Many of the Etruscan painters have the bizarre

VOLTERRA (XIII Century). Palace of the Priori.

elegance which will characterize the art of the Tuscans two thousand years later.

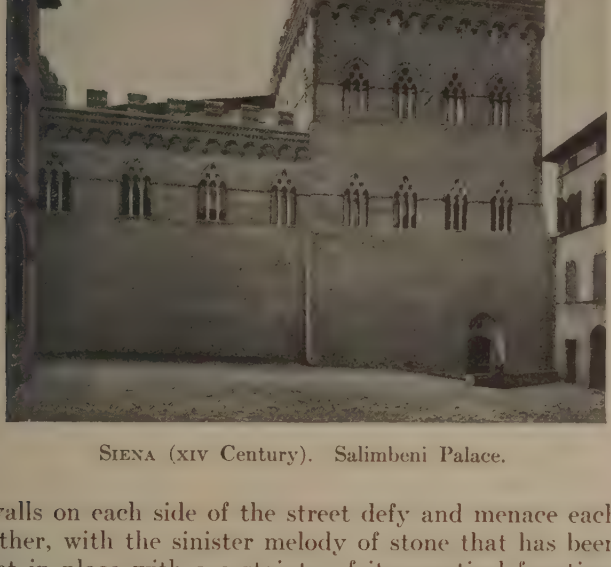
Italy received the Gothic from France, at the dawn of the municipal life of her northern cities. She did not understand it. The forest of the cathedral was not made for her sky. In their silent shadows the immense naves extinguished the fever of her spirit. France is a country united by planes and rivers. Italy is a country divided by mountains. From the north to the south her cities of bronze menace one another from the tops of high hills separated by sudden ravines. The Italy of the Middle Ages could not have a religious architecture, because religious architecture, at that moment, received its grandeur from the social desires which created it and because, the soil being too cut up and the sky too clement to make men feel the necessity for aiding men, Italy had greater need for passion and intelligence, the instruments of the individual, than for instinct and faith, the instruments of the race. We must face the fact that, save for the Romanesque churches of the earliest period, with their pride, their warlike power, and their façade with its patina of gold, the Italian cathedrals are ugly. To be sure, they borrow a singular charm from the hard and lusty cities which mount tumultuously like an army rushing to the attack of the campanile that stands as straight as a mast in a hurricane. It is a bewitching, perverse charm and one from which we cannot tear ourselves without making an effort to dominate its superficial sensations. But when the Gothic appears, the cathedrals are overloaded with decoration and become mannered and grandiloquent. The Romans had made the same error in the old days when they emerged from their utilitarian architecture to erect temples to political parvenus. The Italians did not see that the use of ornament is to define the indispensable organs of the architectural

SIENA (XIV Century). Sansedoni Palace.

body by making them more slender or lighter—heavier or broader, and that this must be done by accenting directly along the lines of their function. When ornament exceeds this role it becomes a source of ugliness. It masks the bone structure of the building whose characteristic projections are the only things that can justify it. There is no monumental architecture without social cohesion. Here the bones come through the skin, there the garments hang loosely. All the architecture of the Italian Renaissance, all the architecture of Europe since that period has been engulfed in a misunderstanding of this fundamental principle. And the misunderstood art of ornament of thirteenth-century France avenged Gothic architecture by invading a school which had no other reason for existence than that of combating its own magnificent precepts.

The municipal palaces were created for precise needs and defined the violent and free personality of the city; the private palaces defined the whole isolated and devouring personality of the lord who lived in them and who brought into the cities, where Italy concenters, the feudal world which had been driven from the countryside. And it is in these palaces that the Italian architect again finds himself, as the Roman architect found himself when his problem was to open roads, to build circuses, thermæ, and aqueducts. Here he is at home, and he affirms the fact. Immediately he becomes strong, sober, precise, and definitive. One receives the impression that the great pavement on which people walk and which is reddened by their blood on days of rebellion, has been set up straight toward the sky, perpendicular with the street. The fierce palaces follow one another, almost solid like blocks, without any other ornament than the brass fists that stick out of the walls as hitching posts for the horses. As the palaces start up from the soil their line is a little oblique, it

bends backward, like the spine of a bowman. Higher up it becomes vertical. At the top it leans forward, like the square shoulders whose mailed arms are about to send down lead and iron. Thus the whole façade is concave, impossible to scale. And two hermetical



Siena (xiv Century). Salimbeni Palace.

walls on each side of the street defy and menace each other, with the sinister melody of stone that has been set in place with a certainty of its practical function, even as a geometrical theorem is inscribed in the logical functioning of the brain. These crenelated cubes dominated by a square tower, these perfectly bare walls pierced by pairs of narrow windows between which stands a colonnette as stiff as an iron bar, and these profiles as hard as axes rise from the paved lanes of Siena, Perugia, Volterra, Florence, and Mantua and never seem more than half open. When the stand-

ard bearers unfurl the banner of the unions in the public square, the gates of bronze are closed against the insurrection of the people. Civil war continues. Let there be two different plumes on men's hoods, let a glance be given or a gesture made and the dagger leaps from its sheath. The tocsin sounds, men are ambushed at the cross streets, pursued under the vaults and murdered in the churches while the fortified houses pour down boiling oil and pitch upon the tumult. There is Italy, and nowhere else. When the illustrious Brunelleschi, right in the fifteenth century, built the Pitti Palace, piling two bare floors on almost unhewn blocks, when, after his journey to Rome, he broke with the disfigured architecture of the French to return to the positive art of his ancestors and abandoned the unreal lyrism of the religious architects of his country to set, on its eightfold ribbing of stone, the dome which rises above the roofs of Florence with a sweep so powerful and so firm, he was accomplishing a more radical revolution against the artists of the Italian Gothic than that which the men of the French Gothic had accomplished, three centuries earlier, against the monks who built in the Romanesque style. He rendered to the genius of his race the homage of recognizing that genius in himself.

III

And so at the hour when northern France was lifting up, amid the tremendous vibration of the bells, sonorous poems of stone and glass that hover and sway over the cities, Italy was defining herself in the violent, straight-lined palaces by the quality which, much later, will define her Renaissance. Already, here in the Middle Ages, she was affirming the rights of the individual. The Romanesque architects of Italy often

signed their works and all of Tuscany knew Nicola Pisano, the sculptor, when not one of the image makers of France had thought to tell his name. The Scaligers, erect on their war horses, were already stamping the dust. It was not possible for popular Christianity to take on the form in the Italian imagination which French sensibility had given it. Only few individuals could, without being consumed by it, embody in their lives the poetry of exalted sentiment which marked the character of the Christianity of the people. There is, indeed, a cathedral in Italy. But all the crowd could do was to cherish an ardent desire for it. It did not set its hand to the work. The body of the cathedral is Francis of Assisi. Its towers are Dante and Giotto.

PISAN ART (XIV to XV Century). Virgin, detail, wood. (*Louvre.*)

The foundation of the century is violence. The feudal Church, here, weighs down more heavily than in other places. The tiara and the miter are bought, when they are not taken by assault. Through the fear of hell the priest obtains obedience of the poor, among whom furious feeling obscures the sense of social duty, even as it does with the priest himself. Remember with what rage the tortures of the in-

ferno are painted on the walls of the Campo Santo of Pisa.

It was by a reaction that gentleness was born. It was as absolute as the preceding violence because, like the latter, it set fire to minds whose passion refused to stop short of full surrender to their insatiable instinct. Francis of Assisi was transported by love as other men were by the frenzy of killing. If he lived under the rule of the men whose corruption and violence had provoked his coming, it was because he felt in himself a gentleness, an invincible power, capable of cleansing and reviving the world. When he caused the human spirit to re-enter nature, from which primitive Christianity had torn it away, he restored to it the nurture of its dignity and strength. His pantheism protested against the Christian dualism which defines the discord between the soul and the flesh, and brutally cuts off access to the great harmonies. Dying, he repented of having practiced asceticism, of having "offended his brother the body." The profound and charming word! He was, in Italy, in the realm of sentiment, what Abelard had been in France and what Roger Bacon was to be in England in the domain of reason. The whole of pagan humanity, which he bound up with the spirit of Christ, revived in his love for universal life. And this love led him, where it had led the last thinkers of the pagan world, to the inner negation of property, which is to say —to freedom.

He did not preach moral sermons to the men of his time, to weary them without changing them. With a poetry so passionate that, while he spoke, he trembled, he laughed, he wept for joy, he told them that everything that was in him spoke of love for what is on the earth. He never ceased loving. He fell asleep and awoke under the trees. He called the beasts to him, he sang, warbled, and whistled with them, he begged alms for

GIOTTO. Saint Francis speaking to the birds, fresco.
(*Upper Church, Assisi.*)

them, and the beasts followed him. He asked counsel of the crickets and they gave it to him, and he did not

GIOTTO. The Virgin and Saint Anne, fresco.
(*Arena, Padua.*)

hesitate to follow it. He did not know theology, but he left this prayer:

Praised be my Lord God, with all his creatures, and especially our brother the sun, who brings us the day and who brings us the

GIOTTO. Jesus insulted by the Jews, fresco, detail.
(*Arena, Padua.*)

light: fair is he, and he shines with a very great splendor. O Lord, he signifies to us thee.

Praised be my Lord for our sister the moon, and for the stars, the which he has set clear and lovely in heaven.

Praised be my Lord for our brother the wind, and for air and

GIOTTO. The confession of Saint Francis, fresco.
(*Santa Croce, Florence.*)

clouds, calms and all weather, by which thou upholdest life in all creatures.

Praised be my Lord for our sister water, who is very serviceable to us, and humble and precious and clean.

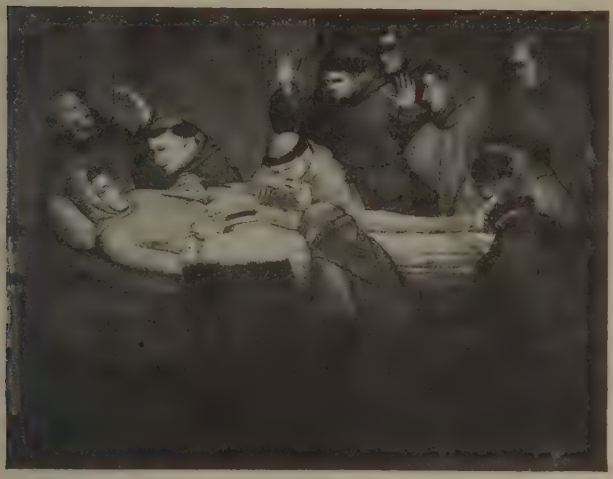
Praised be my Lord for our brother fire, through whom thou givest us light in the darkness: and he is bright and pleasant, and very mighty and strong.

Praised be my Lord for our mother the earth, the which doth sustain us, and bringest forth divers fruits and flowers of many colors, and grass.

(Translation of Maurice Francis Egan.)

When he died, the cities of Umbria fought around his coffin for the possession of his bones. Such is the

understanding of men. No matter. Even this again was passion. And he left in the piety of the multitudes and in the imagination of the strong a memory so resplendent that it illuminated Italy until the end



GIOTTO. Death of Saint Francis, detail, fresco.
(*Santa Croce, Florence.*)

of her evening. He restored to her the love of forms, and on that love she lived for four hundred years.

The greatest poet and the greatest painter of the Middle Ages drank from the well of his memory. At one bound the towers sprang up from the nave. The one rough and thickly growing, shot through by flames, full of the sound of the organ and of thunder—is upheld by iron ribbing. The other is calm, a ray rising from the world of the senses to follow in a straight course to the light of the spirit. Dante and Giotto. The two faces of the Middle Ages. The Inferno and

Paradise. Above all, the two faces of Italy, loving and violent, as she is charming and savage in her luminous bays and in her harsh rocks. It is the first of the great contrasts which we shall find up to the end of her heroic life, contrasts that are enveloped in the same harmony of passion and of intelligence; Masaccio and

GIOTTO. The descent from the Cross, detail, fresco. (*Arena, Padua.*)

Fra Angelico, Donatello and Gozzoli, Luca Signorelli and Ghirlandajo, Michael Angelo and Raphael. The same heaven harkens to the voice of the prophet and to the song of the shepherd as their sound rises to its sparkling spheres.

Giotto is not a primitive, any more than Dante. He is the conclusion of a long effort. If he revealed the language of forms to those who came a hundred years after him, it is slightly in the manner in which Phidias

GIOTTO. The descent from the Cross, fresco. (*Arena, Padua.*)

can still reveal it to those who love him enough to refuse to follow him. Guido, Cimabue, Duccio himself, the noble Sienese who recovered, through Byzantine tradition, the real soul of Greece and for the first time translated the drama of the Passion into terms of

School of Giotto. The massacre of the innocents, fresco. (*Lower Church, Assisi.*)

humanity, had not been able to force open the hieratic mold offered by the painters of Ravenna and the mosaicists sent by Constantinople. With Giotto everything invades the forms at once—movement, life, intelligence, and the great architectural calm. Because he was almost the first one to arrive, the means he used were limited, but with them he was able to translate a perfectly mature conception of the world and of life. His epoch permitted him to give only one expression to them, and he gave it, completely and con-

PERUGIA (XIV Century). Palazzo Pubblico.

sciously, with the freedom and the sobriety of the men who bear within them one of those decisive moments that humanity sometimes expends several centuries in attaining. He was one of those after whom dissociation and analysis must inevitably begin again. Renaissance Italy is separated from him by an abyss, and we shall have to wait until Raphael sketches and Rubens completes, for the modern spirit, the synthesis that Giotto made for the mediæval spirit.

He had that genius for the symbol which mediæval Christianity imposed on its poets as, upon those who cultivate the soil, Nature imposes the rhythm of her seasons. Since life for these poets symbolized the divine idea, they were unable to find their symbol save in the material of life which was passionately loved and passionately studied for what it contains and reveals. The symbol came to Giotto in the attitudes of men, in the humble movement of the beasts which grazed or hopped about at the level of the soil, in the prodigious blue carpet that day spread across space, and in the innumerable fires that night revealed there. Although he had within him only the potential forces accumulated by the unsatisfied needs of the men who had gone before him, although practically no one before his time had observed the life of forms, he could see at once that all our desires, and all our dreams, and all that is divine in us comes to us from our meeting with living forms, from the rough or charming places amid which we have lived, from the majestic bodies which we have seen bowed with weeping or raised again by hope, from the hands that supplicate, or that open, or that part the long hair over faces attentive, dolorous, or grave. His sense of all this was so pure that the image of it all, which he has made to live on the walls of Assisi and of Padua, passes directly into us like a process of life, without our having the time to perceive

that the thing before us is neither sculpture, in the exact sense of the word, since the profiles and the groups, though disposed sculpturally, are projected on a painted surface—nor is it painting, since the role of the values, of the reflections, and the passages is barely

SIMONE MARTINI. Two saints, detail, fresco. (*Lower Church, Assisi.*)

suspected. This rudimentary form is traversed by a lightning flash of the soul which instantly causes it to stand erect.

In Italy he was, in himself, the incarnation of the Christianity of the people which, in that period, covered with its thick tangled growth the field of sen-

sibility of the French crowds. Like them, he could easily feel the meaning for everyone of the birth, the life, and the death of the Man whom the poor had caused to be deified that they might the better recognize themselves in Him; and he told the story in that language both of the intellect and the heart which his race and his sky alone could dictate to him. In the ingenuousness of his heart he found the loftiest drama of man. And as he saw only the essential direction of the gestures of those who enacted that drama, he made them more direct, more exact, and more true in order to bring its scenes before men who, after his time, would need only to close their eyes to feel the drama living within them.

It comes over us gently, in calm and incessant waves. Like a leaf that has fallen on the great waters of a river, we follow the movement of irresistible gentleness which is within men and women and which causes them to prostrate themselves around the dead hero that is in their hands as they support the bloodless head and the broken feet and arms; it spreads like a steady light over earth and heaven which become tranquil round about Him. No one before Giotto, not even those who had turned to woman to speak their farewell through her, no one had ever quite grasped her role in the inner life of humanity, no one had ever seen her thus forever surrounded by passion, ceaselessly torn by maternity and by love, and crucified at all times. Never had anyone said that she, unlike the living gods that we nail to the cross, has not the consolation of pride, that she allows herself to be tortured, and yet does not lose faith in her executioners, who are her sons and the fathers of her sons, and that she asks of them no other recompense than the right to suffer for them. The world had not yet observed all that there is in a face where the eyes are hollow under the agonized lines

SIMONE MARTINI. Calvary, detail. (*Spanish Chapel, Florence.*)

of the brow, in a head that rests on two knotted hands, or in the gesture of two outstretched arms. This work is the greatest dramatic poem in the history of painting. It is not to be described, it is not to be explained, it is not to be evoked, it must be lived through. One must have seen, at Assisi, how those burning harmonies cause the shadows to tremble, one must have seen the heaps of murdered children, the mothers who die or supplicate or gaze at the little limp body across their knees, one must have seen the soldiers who look like butchers. And in Florence, one must have seen the friends of Francis who bow over his death under the wave of sorrow of the last moments. At Padua, one must have seen the kneeling women, those who open their arms and those whose clasped hands make a cradle for the divine corpse, and the Christ among the hideous men who insult Him, and the men who suffer and the ones who pray and the ones who love. And when one has seen this, it is like a strong and gentle wine that one bears away within him forever.

Giotto had picked up the echo of French art in the illuminations in the books, and had certainly met, in Italy, masons and image makers from the banks of the Seine. The son of the old sculptor of Pisa, Giovanni, who came but a short time before him, had touched him by his Nativities, full of animation and tenderness, where one sees the enchantment of the actors in the scene as they hear the cry of the child, as they see the beasts cropping the grass, and as they surprise life at its dawn with the charmed mother who bends over the cradle. Giovanni had left him speechless with his scenes of murder, his crucifixions, and his massacres of the innocents, dramas so burning and so full of movement that they seemed to fill the stone with their passion and to hurl it in gusts of flame before the spectator. He had roused him to enthusiasm by the surety

of his language, as powerful and flexible as a long sword that one bends double and that flashes lightning as it springs back. Through the Sienese painters, he had got back to Ravenna, where, before the splendor of the polychrome of the shining mosaics, he had surmised, beyond Byzantium, the calm of the Panathenaic processions that still took their course around the Parthenon. He had seen the architecture of antiquity at Rome, at Naples, and at Assisi, where Cavallini, the painter, brought to him the tradition of the Roman mosaicists. Standing before the frescoes of Cimabue, that were still fresh, with their blue and the gold that reddened in the glow of the torches, he had worked in the darkness of the lower church where all the mystic skies have accumulated in the plaster their azure, their twilights, and the stars of their nights. The line of the mountains had called to him everywhere, likewise the bays and men. Behold those figures that stand out, pure and with a single movement, those harps and those violins that are played upon, those palms that are waved, those

TADDEO GADDI. The Annunciation. (*Santa Croce, Florence.*)

banners that are bowed, and those noble groups around the beds where there is a death or a birth. Something is quivering there that the Greeks did not know, a sadness in the mouths, a gentleness in the eyes, the confidence that man for a moment had in man and in the hope that suffering might cease. Something shines there that the Middle Ages of the Occident no longer knew, a re-echoing of forms in other forms, a harmony of movements that answer one another, a line which by its rhythmic undulation connects the torsos which bend over with others that are prostrate and still others that stand erect.

I cannot, for my part, imagine a man more intelligent than Giotto. And I am sure that this intelligence is nothing else than the progressive and logical refining of the most direct thought and of the most unstudied emotion. When he had seen how his friend died, and had seen his wife giving birth, or his child suffering, he knew the spontaneous organization among the attitudes of those who weep or those who act in and about the drama, all of them having the drama itself as the sole center of attraction. Without effort, as it seems, and to express this drama and the circumstances of it directly and naturally, the living masses obey the secret laws that have presided over the harmony of the groups since the beginning of time. It is because each one of the beings who takes part therein acts according to the character of his sentiment which he contributes to the more general character of the ensemble—the artistic, or if you will, metaphysical character that reproduces the mysterious eurhythmy of the worlds with an instinctive, musical, and yet close fidelity. Beside the old Florentine master, Raphael seems to have perceived the mere externals of action, Michael Angelo gives the impression of a desperate effort toward that perfect equilibrium which, in Giotto, is an essen-

The Church Militant, fresco, detail. (*Santa Maria Novella, Florence.*)

tial function; Rubens seems to force into theatrical attitudes the inner movement that arranges and distributes; and Rembrandt, at times, seems to be seeking effects. The order that all of them feverishly pursue in the sudden intuitions, the tempests, the revolts, or

ORCAGNA. Paradise, detail, fresco. (*Santa Maria Novella, Florence.*)

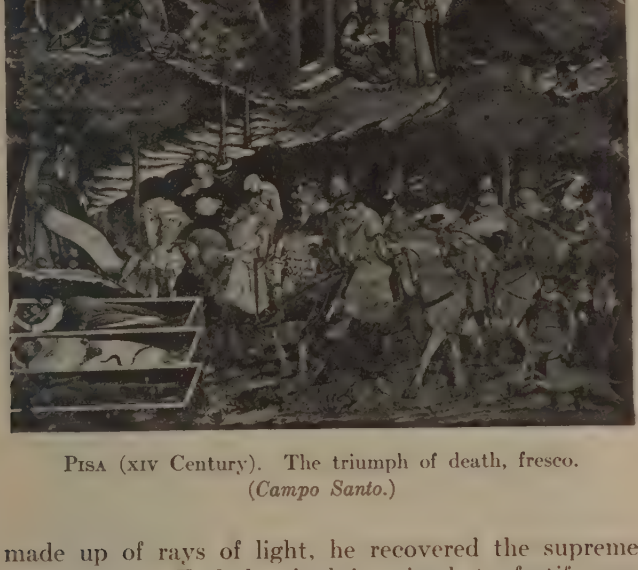
the sustained tension of the spirit enters into Giotto with the emotion itself, and he acquires an architectural and plastic character through the harmonious meeting of the mind and the heart. And, considered in this way, the "composition" of Giotto is perhaps the greatest miracle in the history of painting. I say "miracle," because a miracle is the most spontaneous realization in action of the desire that is most inaccessible in the mind. These clasped hands, these fingers that clutch at the breast, these bodies kneeling or

ANDREA DA FIRENZE (?). The sick imploring Saint Dominic, fresco. (*Spanish Chapel, Florence.*)

arising or half-bowed or erect, this progressive building up in steps of human forms, all the outer attributes of the despair, of the supplication, of the adoration, and of the prayer that make up this pathetic work enter like a flood into the unity of thought to demonstrate the well-defined accord of our moral requirements with our æsthetic needs. A powerful and contagious melody runs through and sways all the violent actions. . . . This poet of sorrow possessed the joy that belongs to the epochs of life in which everything reaches a climax and unites and agrees in all minds, so that it may one day comfort those who will seek the traces of these minds, whatever the faith and the life of the seekers, whatever the cause of their suffering and the form of their hope. It was not Giotto who brought about the unity of his work: it was the unity of the time that created him. And Unity, which is a hymn, raises us above tears. Giotto does not weep over the Christ or over woman, nor do we, as we look at his work. With Giotto we are in the presence of an unspeakable gentleness, an unspeakable hope. He understands, he bends over, he reaches out a strong hand, he lifts up the man who has fallen, and, to sustain him and carry him along, he intones a magnificent chant; his great severe line undulates, rises, descends and reascends, like a voice.

Profoundly Italian though his idealistic, dramatic, and decorative genius, and containing, although he epitomized only a single moment of Italy, the whole Italy that was to come, even fallen Italy, the universal quality of humanity that Giotto possessed brings him into communion with all the heroes of painting, through the piety with which he welcomed life, through the passionate feeling he had for the burdens that it laid upon him, and through the divine desire that caused him to transfigure the world and support the celestial blue of the half-opened paradise on the grave human

accents of the reds, the greens, and the blacks. . . . His hope never rose higher than his courage as a man. On the day when he re-assembled, around the crucified Jesus, angels half emerging from heaven on their wings



Pisa (xiv Century). The triumph of death, fresco. (*Campo Santo.*)

made up of rays of light, he recovered the supreme symbol, that Æschylus had imagined, to fortify our courage when he saw in flight around Prometheus the swarm of the Oceanides.

IV

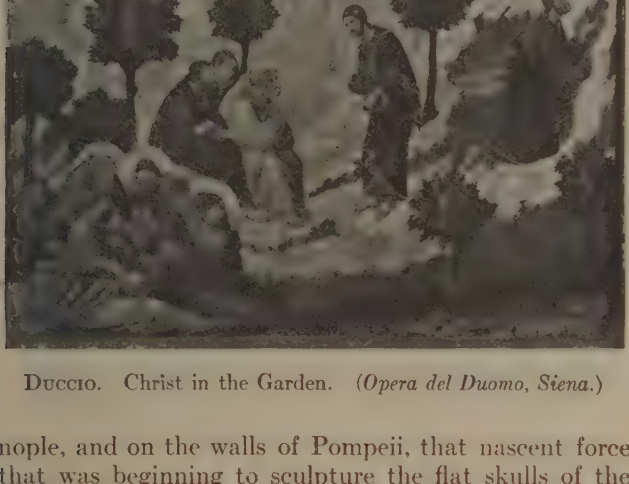
In itself, then, this work is a social monument wherein radiant painting groups sculptural volumes in an architectural rhythm. When the man had disappeared, it crumbled rapidly. Those who came after him could

do no more than gather up the debris for the building of isolated edifices which, in the anarchy of the century, were only provisional sanctuaries, frail and exposed to

Siena (xiv Century). Via Golluzza.

all storms. The disquieted and disunited soul of Italy could no longer find in them more than a shadow of the heroic certitude wherein the great spirits of the Middle Ages had imagined her hope. It was after Giotto that the veritable primitives appeared, but

primitives who had lost the great impulse—the end of an epoch. That dull dawn that illumined from within the great serious faces of the virgins of Cimabue, with their great eyes to whose depths we can never look, any more than we can those of the figures painted on the sarcophagi of Egypt, on the cupolas of Constanti-



Duccio. Christ in the Garden. (*Opera del Duomo, Siena.*)

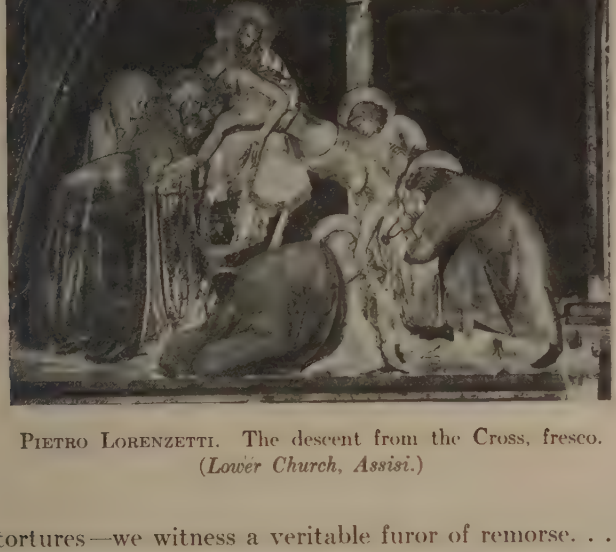
nople, and on the walls of Pompeii, that nascent force that was beginning to sculpture the flat skulls of the Byzantine idols, to lift up, in confused animation, the choir of the saved, to the accompanying tones of the harps of heaven, all of that obscure flame of life which, in the flash of the mind that we call Giotto, suddenly revealed man to himself, sank to earth together at the same time, and its light diminished till nothing was left but a few hesitating gleams that went out in smoke. As the Italian artists could not re-create the magnificent equilibrium of soul which had covered the walls of Assisi and Padua with those austere lines through

which the order of the universe inscribed itself for a moment, and as they saw only two divine works behind them, they sought their refuge in the more despairing one, the only one, indeed, that gave them the liberty to speak as they pleased. Giotto

Duccio. The miraculous draught of fishes.
(*Opera del Duomo, Siena.*)

being inaccessible to them, the Dantesque cycle opens at the moment when the plague in Tuscany justified the visions of the poet. In Florence, Orcagna, the man of severe imagination, the painter who shows us visages ennobled by meditation or contracted by grief, saw all about him the gathering of crowds who raised their eyes to heaven and who bowed their great forms in prayer. Taddeo Gaddi, in the gentleness of his despair, nailed the Christ on all the walls. The Spanish chapel was covered with painting over whose

fervency passed a wind of terror, where the cripple and the sick man crept out of their hovels to stretch forth their hands. At Pisa, abandoned to the terrible Dominicans in its political decadence, it was now only the walls of the cemetery that were decorated, and then with rotting corpses, with worms, with demons and



PIETRO LORENZETTI. The descent from the Cross, fresco. (*Lower Church, Assisi.*)

tortures—we witness a veritable furor of remorse. . . . Siena obstinately allowed herself to sink deeper and deeper into a sickly resolve to die without a struggle.

Of all the Italian cities she had always been the most violent, the one that had known the greatest suffering in civil war and had been most frequently devastated by the military conflicts of the north and south, between which she was caught. She retained the hardness of the age of iron in Italy. Her artists

saw Giotto, but touched him no deeper than his skin, and allowed him to penetrate no deeper than theirs. Duccio played the same role among the painters of Siena as Giotto did among the Florentines. They were of the same age, but doubtless they knew little of each other. In any case, far more than Giotto, he

Ambrogio Lorenzetti. The Pope and the Franciscans, fresco, detail. (*San Francesco, Siena.*)

remains engulfed in the Byzantium which, be it said, he animates with an expressiveness of great power and charm. He has, to the highest degree, the gift of giving life and movement to his crowds. They are active and busy, without great actions, but with a movement in the ensemble that clearly reveals the meaning of the scene at our first glance. He has but the slightest intuition of that sublime "composition" which, with the great Florentine, is no other than a

perfect balance between the moral element and the descriptive element. But he goes straight to his goal of relating the emotion aroused in him by the life and death of the Lord, and he expresses his ideas in living forms; his speech is marked by nobility, tenderness, verve, and archness, even when he is impassioned, and

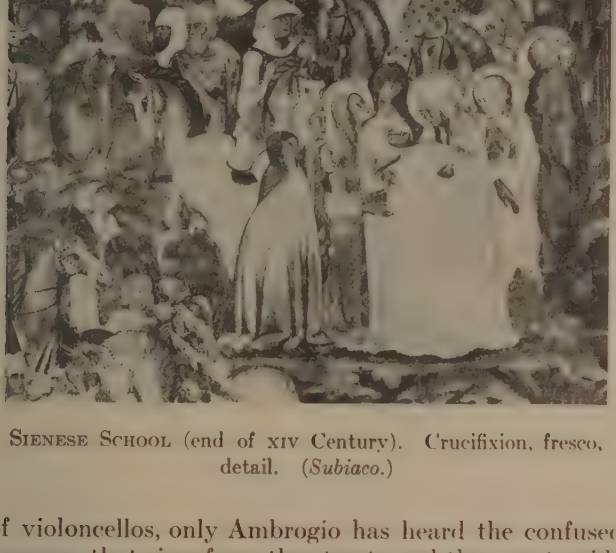
Ambrogio Lorenzetti. Landscape, fresco. (*Academy, Siena.*)

in these qualities he has scarcely a superior throughout the whole of Italian painting, save Giotto himself. His immediate successors, Barna, for example, make a melodramatic travesty, though an ardent and highly colored one, of this power for passion which would suffice to define, outside of the genius of Giotto, the genius of Italy itself. All her heroes have possessed this dramatic soul, and for five centuries all her false artists have shamelessly used it to calumniate, before the eyes of men, the ideal that she has poured forth so generously. Barna and Spinello Aretino disfigure the

death struggle of the Middle Ages of the Latin world, as the Bolognese school was later on to disfigure the death struggle of the Latin Renaissance by turning into theatrical declamation the spiritual realities that had been wrested from the unknown by Masaccio, Da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Raphael, and Titian.

And yet in this retrograde city which, amid the disorder and the anxiety of all minds, was possessed by the desire to protect its gods under its armor, the slow fading of the last flower of the Gothic had a penetrating perfume. We meet with something here that has a certain resemblance to the end of French architecture. . . . It is like the dying poetry of the stained glass with which a sick people irritates its fever, after the living poetry that had resounded in stone and bronze with the voices of strong men. Siena goes to her death in the burning shadow of the marble cathedral whose black and white campanile mounts from the rock under the pitiless sky. She sinks in the mystic fervor of the pure blues and the golds brought to her painters by the Byzantine mosaicists. Simone Martini withdraws his gaze from the military cavalcades and the high crenelated towers that arise and threaten one another over the wave of the roofs, only that he may listen the better to the vibrating of the celestial harps in the space that no eye can penetrate, but from which comes the wind that sways the lilies he paints. With him all the walls of the palaces and the churches tremble with profound voices, as if the pale virgins who cover them from top to bottom and who, amid the gold and the palms, raising the great oblique eyes in their long pure faces, were together making audible, in the poignant accents of chanted suffering and gentleness, the noble protest of the consoling legends against the noble effort of the time. In the heart of the fifteenth century, when round them a renewed ideal is tor-

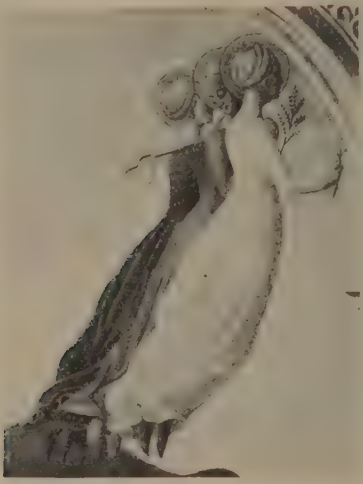
menting Tuscany, Bartolo di Fredi, Sano di Pietro, and Lorenzo di Pietro are still obstinately listening to distant voices which for the other Italians are lost in silence. Only Ambrogio Lorenzetti, the powerful decorator whose frescoes sing, vibrate, weep, and become calm again and swell like the tone of the choir



Sienese School (end of xiv Century). Crucifixion, fresco, detail. (*Subiaco.*)

of violoncellos, only Ambrogio has heard the confused murmur that rises from the streets and the countryside and from the little hills covered with vineyards and pine trees—the murmur that announces a new awakening; and at the same time his brother Pietro imprints a new unity upon the plastic splendor that he discovers in the drama of the Cross. A marvelous animation peoples his august landscapes, where the labors of the husbandmen and scenes of war cover the serried hills

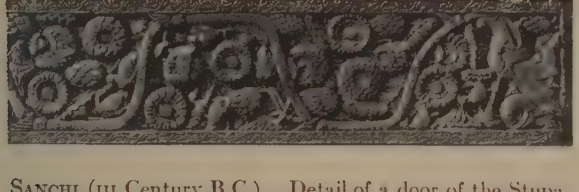
and cut into the hollow valleys. It is a vast poem, epic and intimate, teeming with imagination, as if a world foreseen were fermenting in the furrows of the plow, in the seed, and in harvests. And then, more profoundly than any one of the Florentines of his time, Ambrogio scrutinizes and characterizes faces. His



Sano di Pietro or Sassetta.
Charity, Poverty, and Humility.
(*Chantilly.*)

great effigies, as firm and pure as the portraits of the Chinese, seem graven in the wall, seem outlined and cemented with stone. Slowly and powerfully their eyes awaken and look out from the hard faces, they do not move, but are terrible in their severity, their concentration, and their silence. Their drawing is so concise and so completely a result of the will of the artist, the expressive lines and curves are so closely

linked that we already behold a first and almost complete realization of the desire to determine by geometrical means the least abstract characteristics of life when it moves us most; and later on, it will be in an art conceived in this manner that we shall find the meeting place of the heroes of the following century, Paolo Uccello, Andrea del Castagno, Piero della Francesca, Luca Signorelli. But even so, Ambrogio, almost as truly as his brother Pietro, remains a man of the Middle Ages in the strength of his moral philosophy—already quite strained, it is true, and too voluntary, through his uncompromising and precise sense of the just and the unjust expressed in the beautiful dark harmonies, red and black, in which there resounds, with a painful sharpness, the supreme appeal of the past. Siena dies of her desire to maintain, in the face of new needs, the worn-out principle that had caused her to live. While she is shutting herself up in her narrow independence, Florence absorbs Tuscany, and subjects it to her spirit.



SANCHI (III Century B.C.). Detail of a door of the Stupa.

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[1] The names of the artists who are directly in question are printed in italics.

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AFRICA. Dance mask (Gaboon). (*Guillaume Collection.*)

SYNOPTIC TABLES

Signs and abbreviations employed in the synoptic tables

A.	Arab art	P.	Persian art	a.	architect
Am.	American art	Pl.	Portuguese art	c.	ceramist
B.	Byzantine art	R.	Romanesque art	m.	musician
M.	Mussulman art	Ra.	Russian art	s.	sculptor
N.	Norman art	S.	Scandinavian art	p.	painter

Dates	India, Etc., and America
	Old temple of Bhuwaneswar
5th century	
	Monolithic temple of Viswakarma at Ellora
6th century	Stupa of Sarnath
	Monolithic temples of Mahavellipore Monolithic temple of Indra at Ellora
	Monolithic temple of Badami (579)
	Great temple of Bhuwaneswar
	Stupa of Buddnath at Nepal (?)
7th century	
	Am. Yucatan monuments, Mexico (?)
	Temples and frescos of Ajanta
	Sculptured rocks of Mahavellipore Monolithic temple of Dumar Lena at Ellora
8th century	Monolithic temple of Elephanta Thibetan monasteries Temple of Kamahshina at Conjeveram
	Am. Mexican monuments (?)
	Temple of Ganthai at Khajurao Monolithic temple of Kailasa at Ellora

Dates	China	Japan
	Manufacture of glass	
	Greco-Indian art (Buddhistic)	
5th century		*Ishigara*, p. (?)
	Lou T'an-wei, p.	
	Subterranean temples of Yun-Kang	
	Sie Ho (479–502), p. and critic	
	The Great Wall	
	Subterranean temples of Long-men (525–675)	
6th century	*Tchang Seng-yeou*, p.	
	Buddhistic bronzes	
		Introduction of Chinese art
	Subterranean temples of Kong	
		Invention of lacquer
	Yen Li-to, p.	*Shibakura-Tsukuri*, s.
7th century		
	Yen-Li-pen, p.	*Tashibe-no-Komaro*, p.
	Tombs of Tchaoling	
	Tombs of Kong	
	Tombs of K'ien	Temple of Horiuji
	Sie-Tsi (?–713), p.	
	Li Sseu-hiem (651–715), p.	
	Tombs of Chouen ling (700)	
	Tombs of K'iao king (712)	
	Northern school of painting	*Oshi-Katsu*, p.
		Frescoes of Horiuji
	Wang-Wei (699–759), p.	*Kimimaro Kuninakano*, s. of the Dai
	Southern school of painting	of Naru (739)
8th century		*Roben* (688–773), s.
	Li Tchao-Tao, p.	
	Ts'ao Pa, p.	
	Giant statues of Tche-kiang	
	Han Kan, p.	
	Pagoda of Ling-Kouang-Sseu	

Byzantium and Islam	Italy
e Theodosian Capital osaics of G. Placidia at Ravenna	
	Nave of Sta. Maria Maggiore, Rome (431)
	San Pietro in Vincoli, Rome (442)
osaics of the Baptistery of Ravenna	
zantine miniatures	
e church of Kalat Sinean urch of S. Tommaso near Bergamo nt'Appolinare Nuovo at Ravenna (500)	
e church of Ezra (516)	
	Mausoleum of Theodoric at Ravenna (520)
themios of Tralles and *Isidore* of Miletus, a of Saint Sophia at Constantinople (532) *lianus Argentarius*, a. of Sant' Apollinare i asse at Ravenna (535–49) an Vitale at Ravenna (547)	Saints Cosmo and Damian at Rome (526)
yzantine miniatures ian palace of Ctesiphon ewelry. Goldsmith's art	
idore the Younger, a. ac monuments	
oces of Baouit in Egypt	
Mosaics of Parenzo	
	Column of Phocas at Rome (608)
anian palace of Machita in Syria	
Mosque of Amru in Cairo (642)	
Byzantine miniatures Jewelry. Goldsmith's art	St. Agnes beyond the walls, Rome
Mosque of Jerusalem (687)	
Great mosque of Kairouan (703) Great mosque of Damascus (708) Mosaics of Mount Sinai	
Great mosque of Tunis (732) Frescoes of Santa Maria Antica at Rome Miniatures. Jewels. Goldsmith's art Djouma mosque at Ispahan (760)	Byzantine art
Great mosque of Cordova (785) Persian palace of Rakka (790)	

Dates	France
5th century	
6th century	First ramparts of Carcassonne
	Merovingian weapons and jewels
7th century	
	Merovingian weapons and jewels
	Temple Saint-Jean at Poitiers
	Jean Lafrimpe, s. of Bourges
8th century	Merovingian weapons and jewels

England	Flanders and the Netherlands
h miniatures	
e cross of Carew	
sh miniatures	
sh and Anglo-Saxon miniatures	

Dates	Germany and Scandinavia	Spain and Portugal
5th century		
6th century		
7th century		
8th century	*Godescalc*, illuminator of the Book of the Gospels of Charlemagne (781)	Miniatures
	Carolingian cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle (796–804)	Arab art

nt Augustine (354–430)
ting of Rome by the Visigoths (410)
Visigoths in Spain (417)

odosius II burns Olympia (426)

la. The Huns in Gaul (451)
me pillaged by the Vandals (455)

l of the Roman Empire (475)
ristianization of Ireland
Franks in Gaul (486)
Ostrogoths in Italy (493)
is I. Christianization of France (496)

eodoric (473–526)

ssiodorus (468–562), historian

stinian and *Theodora* (527–65), close the Schools of Athens (529)
Toltecs conquer Mexico (?)
Slavs in Greece (540)

lisarius (494–565)

ddhism in Japan (552)
osroes (531–79)
Gregory the Great (540–68), destroys the pagan libraries
ristianization of Scotland (560)
he Lombards in Italy (568)

régoire de Tours (538–94)
hristianization of England

'ang Dynasty in China (618)
Iohammed 571–632). The Hegira (622). The Koran
aking of Damascus by the Arabs (635)
aking of Jerusalem by the Arabs (637)
aking of Persia by the Arabs (640)

The Chinese invent the compass

Conquest of Northern Africa by the Arabs (640–710)

Foundation of Venice (697)

The Arabs in Spain (711)
The *Kojiki*, sacred book of the Japanese (712)

Leo the Isaurian prohibits the icons (728)
The iconoclasm of Byzantium

The Franks repulse the Arabs (752)

Founding of Bagdad (762)
Haroun-al-Rashid (766–809)
Council of Nicea. Restoration of the icons (787)
Charlemagne (768–814). Christianization of Germany

The Empire of the Occident

Dates	India, Etc., and America
	Am. Aymara monuments in Peru (Temple of the Sun at Pachaca Palace of the Grand Chimu, Ga the Sun at Tiahuanaco) (?)
	Tower of Sri Allat at Chittor
9th century	Am. Mexican monuments (?)
	Buddhist temple of Boro-Boudou Java (?)
	First Angkor temples in Cambodia (?
	Temple of Rajanari at Bhuwaneswar
	Temples of Magda (?)
10th century	Am. Mexican monuments (?)
	Temple of Telimandir at Gwalior
	Temple of Vishnu at Khajurao
	Temples of Khajurao
	Temples of Khajurao
	Pagoda of Tanjore
	Temple of Vimalsha at Mount-Abu (10
	Jain temples of Palitana
11th century	Am. Quichua monuments of Cuzco, P (Cyclopean walls, Covor de Incatam Fountain of Quormcacha (?)
	Am. Mexican monuments
	Temples of Shas-Bao at Gwalior
	Temples and artificial lakes of Mahob

China	Japan
Tao-Tseu, p.	**Kobo-Daishi** (774–835), s. Academy of Yedokora
	Kondara Kabanari (?–853), p.
sien, p.	*Ohara Sanemori*, smith
ntion of porcelain	Temple of Obaku
Hao, p.	Temple of Kassuga
an, p.	**Kose Kanaoka** (850-931), p.
ang Ts'iuan, p.	
g-Yuan, p.	
Tch'eng, p.	*Kose Hirotaka*, p.
rcelain factory of King-te-tchin (1005)	
n-Kouan, p.	*Jocho* (?–1057), s.
	Motomitsu, p.
	Tamenari, p. founds the school of Takuma
ouo-Hi, p. omb of Yong-tchaoling (1063)	
i Long-mien (?–1106), p.	Sabers, helmets, armor

Dates	Byzantium and Islam
	A. Bridge of Cordova (815)
9th century	B. Miniatures. Jewels. Goldsmith's art
	A. Mosque of Ibn-Touloun at Cairo (878)
	B. *Lazarus*, Byzantine, p. A. *Hassan-Ibn-Mohlak*, Arab, p.
	B. Theotokos church in Constantinople (930)
	B. Church of St. Nicodemus, Athens
10th century	B. Miniatures. Jewels. Goldsmith's art
	A. Mosque of El-Azhar, Cairo (971) A. Great mosque of Aleppo (976)
	B. First monasteries of Mount Athos B. *Belonas*, Byzantine, p. B. *Andrew*, Byzantine, p.
	B. Church of the Holy Apostles, Salonica
	B. Church of Saint Elijah, Salonica (1012)
	B. Church of the Virgin, Salonica
	B. Church of Saint-Sophia, Kiev (1037)
	B. Cathedral of Novgorod (1045–52)
11th century	B. Miniatures. Jewels. Goldsmith's art A. *Ibn-Aziz, Kasir*, Arab painters
	A. Minaret of Koutoubia, at Marakech (106
	A. Ramparts of Avila (?)

Italy	France
	Carolingian art
ntine art	Miniatures Saint-Rémi, Rheims (852–1049)
antine art	Miniatures
	Stained glass
	Byzantine cathedral of Périgueux (984–1047)
niatures (Southern Italy)	Saint-Florent carpet at Saumur (985)
Miniato, Florence	
Zeno, Verona (11th century–1138)	R. Church of Elne (11th–12th centuries)
ido d'Arezzo, m.	R. Cathedral of Cahors (1119)
n Lorenzo, Florence	R. Church of Cerizy (1020. R. tower of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Paris (1020). Founding of Mont Saint-Michel (1020)
thedral of Anagni, Piedmont	R. Church of St. Benoit-sur-Loire (1026–1218) R. Church of Puy-en-Velay
urch of Santa Maria, Arezzo	R. Church of Conques (1035–1107) R. Church of Saint-Genou
	R. Church of Royat (11th–13th centuries)
iniatures	R. Church of Châtel-Montagne
urch of Santa Maria, Toscanella (1050–1206)	Miniatures. Tapestries
thedral of Parma (1058–74)	
uschetto, a. of the cathedral of Pisa (1063–111*8*)	R. Church of St. Servin, Toulouse (1060–96) R. Cathedral of Autun (1060–78)
	R. Church of Issoire
thedral of Salerno (1070)	R. Cloister of Montmajour R. Church of Preuilly-sur-Claise
athedral of Lucca (1070–1204) hurch of Amalfi omanesque church of Bari (1087–1130)	*Gauzon*, a. of the abbey of Cluny R. Church of St. Etienne, Caen (1077) R. Church of Notre Dame, Poitiers R. Church of Ste. Croix, Quimperlé

Dates	England	Flanders and the Nether
9th century		
10th century	Anglo-Saxon miniatures	
	Picton Castle	
11th century	Anglo-Saxon miniatures	
	Tapestries	
	Tower of London (1078) N. Cathedral of Hereford (1079–1525)	

Germany and Scandinavia	Spain and Portugal
lingian art	
atures	
	Arab art
le of Altenhar	
iatures	Miniatures
anesque cathedral of Mayence (978– 2th-15th centuries)	
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	Aparicio, Rodolfo, s. s.
Cathedral of Speyer (1030) nta Maria in Capitol, Cologne (11th- 13th centuries) stle of Ober Barr (11th–13th centuries) Cathedral of Bonn (11th–12th cen- turies, 1208–21)	
iniatures Cathedral of Constance (1052–1435)	Miniatures
artburg of Eisenach (1070)	
Church of Trondjhem (Norway)	
	R. Cathedral of Santiago (1078–1211)

Dates	History
	Saint-Benedict (750–821). The Rule (817)
	Victory of the iconolators at Byzantium (842)
9th century	The Arabs in Sicily (831–78) Persia withdrawn from Arab rule (870) Siege of Paris by the Normans (884) The *Fujiwara*, Masters of the Palace, Japan (888)
	Founding of Cluny (909) The Duchy of Normandy (912)
10th century	The Empire of the Incas
	Sung Dynasty in China (960) *Othon I.* The Holy Roman Empire (962) *Firdousi* (940–1020), Persian poet Byzantium Christianizes Russia. Accession of the Capetians in France (987) The Thousand and One Nights
	Avicenne (980–1037)
11th century	The Thousand and One Nights
	The great schism (1054)
	Robert Guiscard. The Normans in Sicily (1061) *William the Conqueror.* The Normans in England (1066) The commune of Le Mans (1067) The Chichimecs invade Mexico (?)
	The commune of Cambrai (1076) The Pope and the Emperor. Canossa (1077)

Date	India, Etc., and America
	Monuments of Angkor in Cambodia (?)
	Temples of Bailur and Hullabid
	Temple of Sideswahra at Omkarji
12th century	Am. Mexican monuments (?)
	Temple of Jaggernauth (1193–1247)
	Jain temples of Mount-Abu (1197–1247)
	M. Mosque of Koutab at Delhi (1199–220)
	M. Great mosque of Ajmir (1200)

Date	China	Japan
	Mi Fei (1051–1107), p.	
		Kwaikei, s.
	The Emperor *Houeitsong* (1082–1135), p. founds the Academy of painting The Sinan ho houa p'ou (1120) catalogue	
		Miotshin, carver
		Toba Sojo, p.
		Tamehissa, p.
12th century	*Tchang*, ceramist	
		Unkei, s.
		School of Kasuga

Byzantium and Islam	Italy
	Cathedral of Grado
erta del Sol of Toledo (1088)	
nt Mark's, Venice (1100)	*Lanfranco*, a. of the cathedral of Modena (1099–1184)
	Cathedral of Cremona (1107–90) Church of San Clemente, Rome (1108) Torre Asinelli (1109–19) and Torre Gaurisenda, Bologna
	Roger of Amalfi, caster
	Church of Santa Maria, Corneto (1121) Cathedral of Piacenza (1122)
urch of Pantocrator, Constantinople (1124)	
latine Chapel of Palermo (1132)	Church of San Giovanni, Palmero (1132)
osque of Tlemcen (1135)	Cathedral of Ferrara (1135)
	Santa Maria in Trastevere, Rome (1140)
	Nicolaus, s. of Verona
osaics of Cefalù (1148) *inatures*. Jewels. Goldsmith's art Byzantine architecture	Miniatures *Diotisalvi*, a. of the Baptistery of Pisa(1153–1278)
	Statue of Saint Peter in Rome (?)
astle of Almodovar del Rio, in Spain (?)	
	Cathedral of Pistoia (12–13th centuries)
	Cathedral of Monréale (1174–89) *Bonanno*, a. of the Campanile of Pisa (1174–1350)
	Barisano, caster, at Trani
alace of the Cul e, Palmero (1180)	The lion of St. Mark at Venice (1180)
	Palazzo dei Trecento at Treviso (1184)
bdallah-ben-Amr, a. of the great Mosque of ossoul (1191)	Cathedral of Siena (12th century–1264) Castle of Fontanellato
eber, a. of the Giralda of Seville (1195)	The *Cosmati*, Roman mosaicists Baptistery of Parma (1196–1216–70–1302)
aloubi, a. of the Alcazar of Seville (1199)	Fonte-Branda at Siena (1198)

Date	France
	R. Church of the Trinity, Caen (1083)
	R. Church of Dorat (1088–1130)
	R. Church of Souvigny (1088–1114)
	R. Church of Vézelay (11th century–1135)
	R. Church of Airvault (1095–1100)
	Monolithic church of St. Emilion
	R. Cathedral of Angoulême (1100–30)
	R. Churches of Saint Gilles and Saint Tro at Arles
	R. Church of Aulnay-en-Saintonge
	R. Church of Bourg-St. Andéol (1108)
	R. Church of Souillac
	R. Church of St. Yrieix (12th–13th centuri
	The Ogive at Morienval (1115)
	R. Church of St. Pierre de Saintes (1117–2
	R. Abbey of Fontevrault (1119)
	R. Church of Melle
	R. Church of St. Privat (12th–15th centuri
	Château of Carcassonne (1125)
	R. Church of Brioude (12th–13th centuries)
	Church of Fontenay (1130–45)
	Basilica of Saint Denis (1132–44–1230)
	Château of Loches
	R. Hôtel de Ville of Saint-Antonin
	R. Cloister of Le Thoronet
	Cathedral of Noyon (1140–90)
	Church of Lisieux (1142)
	Cathedral of Angers (1145–1165)
	Château of Castelnaudun
	Donjon of Niort
	Miniatures. Tapestries
	Cathedral of Le Mans (1150–1254)
	Cathedral of Senlis (1153–1556)
	Saintes-Maries de la Mer
	Godefroy de Claire, goldsmith
12th century	Cathedral of Poitiers (1162–1379)
	Notre Dame, Paris (1163–82–13th–14th cent
	Guillaume de Sens (?–1180) a. of the cath of Sens (1124–68) and o
	Church of Redon (12th–14th centuries)
	Church of Fécamp (1170–1200)
	Enamelers of Limoges
	Château of Suze-la-Rousse (12th–14th centu
	Church of Mouzon
	Nicolas de Verdun, goldsmith
	Abbey of Moissac (1180–1260–1457)
	Church of Braine (1180–1216)
	Church of the Templars at Luz (12th centuries)
	Church of St. Loup-hors-Bayeux (12th centuries)
	Cathedral of Bayeux (12th–15th centuries)
	Cathedral of Agde
	Cathedral of Soissons (12th–13th centuries)
	Cathedral of Laon (1191–1225)
	Cathedral of Bourges (1192–1324)
	Cathedral of Chartres 1194–1280–1506)
	Church of Paray-le-Monial
	Cathedral of Meaux (12th–16th centuries)
	Cathedral of Langres

England	Flanders and the Netherlands
thedral of St. Albans (1080–13th–14th turies)	
thedral of Chichester (1085–1108–15th tury)	
ester Castle	
thedral of Durham (1093–1400)	
ich Cathedral (1094–1356)	
e Abbey (1095)	
roke Castle (11th–14th centuries)	
thedral of Gloucester (11th–15th cen- ies)	
urch of Cambridge (1101)	
Ogive at Durham (1104)	
thedral of Ely (1109–1321–15th cen- y)	
athedral of Oxford (12th–13th–14th turies)	
esbury Abbey	
lworth Castle (1120–13th–16th centuries)	
orbier Castle (12th–14th centuries)	
gow Cathedral (12th–15th centuries)	
n Hall Castle (12th–14th–15th centuries)	
del Castle (12th century–1791)	
Cross Hospital, Winchester (1136–1200)	
ern Abbey (1138)	
rborough Cathedral (1140–55)	
iatures	Tapestries
k Cathedral (1154–1290–1360)	
hedral of Canterbury (1070–1420–95) *Guillaume l'Anglais*, second architect)	
David's Cathedral (1180–1220–90)	
offroy de Noyers, French a. of Lincoln Cathedral (1186–1250–1300)	
	Belfry of Tournai (1187–1391)
	Markets, Ypres (1200–1304)

Date	Germany and Scandinavia	Spain and Portugal
	R. Cathedral of Bamberg (1081–12th-13th centuries)	
	R. Cathedral of Treves	*Alvar Garcia*, a. of the R. cathe Avila (1091)
	R. Castle of Goslar	
	R. Church of Worms (1110-81)	R. Old Cathedral of Salamanca
	S. Church of Borgund, Norway	R. Cathedral of Zandra
	R. Cathedral of Freiburg (1123–1250–1354)	
	St. Godard, Hildesheim (1133–72)	*Robert Burdet*, French a. of the Cat of Tarragona (1133–13th century
	Castle of Schoenburg	
	House of the Premonstrants, Prague (1140)	Pl. R. Cathedral of Coimbra
	S. R. Cathedral of Lund, Sweden (1145	
	Miniatures	Fl. Abbey of Alcobaça (1148–1222)
	S. Cathedral of Linkoping, Denmark (1150)	
	Cathedral of Erfurt (1154–1349–1452)	
		Cloister of Ripoll
12th century		
		Mateo, a. and s. of Santiago
	Church of St. Martin, Nuremberg 1172–1437)	
	Cathedral of Lubeck (1173–1276–1335)	
	Cathedral of Strassburg (1179–1277). (French style)	
	Castle of Eltz (12th–16th centuries)	Cathedral of Evora (1186–1204)
	The Ogive at Mayence (1191)	

ıe University of Salerno (1080)

he Chanson de Roland

he First Crusade (1095)

ommune of Noyon (1108)
ommune of Laon (1110)
ommune of Sens (1112)
ommune of Amiens (1113)
ommune of Soissons (1115)

he Order of the Templars (1119)

belard (1079–1142)

he Republic of Florence (1125)
he University of Bologna (1129)
aint Bernard (1091–1152)

'ommune of Rheims (1138)

ommune of Beauvais (1144)
rnaldo da Brescia (1160–**55**). The Roman Republic (1146)

he Second Crusade (1147)
he University of Paris (11[illegible])

he Thousand and One Nights
aladin (11[illegible]–7?)
verroes (1100–98)

The Ord[illegible] of Calatrava (1164)

)xford University (1167)

The Lombard League (1167)

Barbarossa (1147–90)

The Aztecs invade Mexico (?)

The Niebelungen

Gottfried von Strassburg. Tristan and Ysolde

The Third Crusade (1189)
The Teutonic Order (1190)
The Shogunate in Japan (1192)
India conquered by the Mussulmans (1193)
Richard-Cœur-de-Lion (1189–99)

Philippe-Auguste (1180–1223)

Dates	India, Etc., and America
	Temple of Gundicha Gahri at Puri (1
	Pagodas of Tripetty
13th century, 1st half	Am. Mexican monuments (?)
	M. Mausoleum of Altamsh at Delhi (1
13th century, 2d half	Am. Mexican monuments (?)

China	Japan
Yuan, p.	
n statues of Teng-fong hien (1213)	
ckled porcelains	
Kouei, p.	
	Toshiro, ceramist, founds the pottery works of Séto
?	*Tsunetaka*, p., founds the Tosa school
a Lin, p.	
	Goroyemon Ono, caster of the Daibutsu of Kamakura (1252)
irst cloisonné works (?)	
Lao K'o-kong, p.	
Ramparts of Pekin (1274)	
Yen Houei, p.	

Dates	Byzantium and Islam
13th century, 1st half	B. Miniatures. Jewels. Goldsmith's art Ra. Byzantine architecture
	A. Alhambra of Granada (1230)
	B. Monastery of Daphne in Attica
13th century, 2d half	Miniatures. Jewels. Goldsmith s art

Italy	France
	The Krack of the Knights in Palestine (1202)
of Montelupo (1203)	
	Cathedral of Rouen (1202–1302)
	Mont Saint Michel (1203–1460–15th century)
ei Palace, Siena (1205)	
	Cathedral of Dol (1205–14th century)
ipal Palace of Volterra (1208–57)	
	Cathedral of Troyes (1208–1324–1400)
	Cathedral of Nicosia in Cyprus (1209–28)
orenzo Outside the Walls, Rome	**Jean d'Orbais** (?–1231), a. of the cathedral of Rheims (1211)
	Cathedral of Bayonne (1213–1344)
	Cathedral of Auxerre (1215)
	Cathedral of Coutances
	Robert de Luzarches (?–1223), a. of the cathedral of Amiens (1220–88)
'acopo, Florentine mosaicist	
	Château of Coucy (1223–30)
	Etiene de Mortagne, a. of the cathedral of Tours (1225–1527)
panile of Modena (1224–1319)	
atures	Miniatures. Tapestries
	Enamelers of Limoges
ch of Assisi (1228–53)	
	Hugues Libergier, a. at Rheims
	Cathedral of Quimper (13th–15th centuries)
	Michel Lepapelart (?–1257), a. of the cathedral of Chalons-sur-Marne
	Cathedral of Bazas (1233–16th–17th centuries)
	Cathedral of Toul (13th–14th–15th centuries)
	Cathedral of Lausanne (1235–75)
ta da Pisa, p.	Church of St. Pierre, Caen (13th–15th centuries)
	Philippe Chinard, a. of Frederick II
	Ramparts and houses of Cordes
	Cathedral of Metz (13th–16th centuries)
zzo Pubblico of Bologna (1245–1444)	*Pierre de Montereau* (?–1268), a. of the Saint Chapelle, Paris (1245–48)
	Eudes de Montereau (?–1289), a. (?) of the cathedral of Beauvais (1247–84–1570)
nastery of Subiaco	
	Jean Deschamps, a. of the cathedral of Clermont-Ferrand (1248–15th century)
hedral of Cefalù (1251)	Cathedral of Bordeaux (1252)
ola Pisano (1208–78), Pisan, s.	*Eudes de Montereau*, a. of the ramparts of Aigues Mortes and of Jaffa
	Cathedral of Sées (13th and 14th centuries)
	Château of Murols (13th–15th centuries)
ss works in Venice	La Conciergerie
	Château of Angers
	Cathedral of Limoges (13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries)
do di Siena, p.	*Jehan Langlois*, a. of Saint Urbain, Troyes (1262–1329)
	The "Livre des Métiers" of *Etienne Boileau*
	Martin Ragery, a. of the cathedral of Colocza in Hungary
	Cathedral of Saint Brieuc (13–15th centuries)
rgaritone d'Arezzo (1216?–99?), p.	
olfo di Cambio (1232–1301), a. of the cathedral	*Pierre d'Angicourt*, French a. of the Two Sicilies
f Florence (1274)	*Adam de la Halle* (1240–88), m.
ta-Maria-Novella, Florence (1274)	Cathedral of Saint-Pol-de-Léon (13th, 14th, and 15th centuries)
niatures	Cathedral of Narbonne (1272)
	Miniatures. Tapestries
	Enamelers of Limoges

Dates	England
	Rochester Cathedral (1201–77)
	Wells Cathedral (1210–14th century)
	Salisbury Cathedral (1220–58)
13th century, 1st half	Worcester Cathedral (13th century–13? Miniatures
	Westminster Abbey (1245–69)
	Matthew Paris, illuminer
	Saint Mary Magdalen Redcliffe, Bristol (14th, and 15th centuries)
	Litchfield Cathedral (13th–14th centuri
13th century, 2d half	Miniatures

NDERS AND THE NETHERLANDS	GERMANY AND SCANDINAVIA
	Cathedral of Magdeburg (1209–1363)
	Cathedral of Limburg (1213–42)
-Gudule, Brussels (1220–73–1450)	
tures. Tapestries	Miniatures
	Cathedral of Frankfurt (1235–53) Cathedral of Marburg (1235–83)
ild de Binche, a. of the cathedral of urnai (1242–1325)	St. Lorenz, Nuremberg (1240–77) Castle of Stolzenfels (1242–59) Cathedral of Munster (13th–14th centuries) *Gerard de Rile* (?–1296), a. of the cathedral of Cologne (1248–1322–1880) Cathedral of Drontheim (1248–1300) S. Cathedral of Naunburg (1250–14th–15th centuries)
edral of Utrecht (1251–67)	Santa Maria, Lübeck (1251–1310) *Tannhäuser* The Minnesinger Castle of Rheinstein
Belfry of Bruges	Rathaus of Brunswick (13th to 15th centuries) Cathedral of Xanten (1263–1519)
	Cathedral of Halberstadt
iatures. Tapestries	S. Cathedral of Stavanger, Norway (1272) Castle of Marienburg (1274) Castle of Ratisbon (1275–15th century) Miniatures

Dates	Spain and Portugal
	Old Cathedral of Lérida (1202)
	Church of Vera Cruz, Segovia (12
	Cathedral of Burgos (1221–1442–1
13th century, 1st half	Miniatures
	Pedro Perez (?–1290), a. of the cath of Toldeo (1227–1493)
	Rodrigo Esteban, p.
	Cathedral of Leon (1250–14th centu
	Bartolomeo, s of Tarragona
13th century, 2d half	Miniatures
	Church of St. Paul, Valladolid (1463)

- *ninick* (1170–1221)
- 'ourth Crusade. Taking of Constantinople
- 4)
- *m von Eschenbach* (1170–1220). Parsifal.
- *s-Khan* (1154–1226). The Mongols in China.
- ersia, in Russia
- le of the Albigenses (1208–15)
- *s of Assisi* (1182–1226)
- a Charta in England (1215)
- ifth Crusade (1217)
- *ujiwara* Shogunate in Japan (1220)
- 'housand and One Nights
- ixth Crusade (1228)
- hquisition (1229)
- *rick II*, Emperor of Germany (1218–50)
- Guelphs and the Ghibellines (1240)
- Mongols in Hungary, in Germany (1241)
- German Hansa (1241)
- *Louis* (1226–70)
- Seventh Crusade (1249)
- badours and Trouvères
- *Thomas Aquinas* (1226–74)
- *i* (1184–1291), Persian poet
- of the Frankish Empire in the East (1261)
- *er Bacon* (1214–94)
- Eighth Crusade (1270)
- Mongols in Japan (1274)
- ubadours and Trouvères
- Thousand and One Nights

Date	India, Etc., and America
13th century, 2d half	
	Temple of Puri
14th century, 1st half	Am. Mexican monuments (?)
	Restoration of the temple of B Gaya

China	Japan
nomical instruments of Pekin (1279)	
statues of Hiao-li-pou (1296)	
-Mong-fou (1254–1322), p.	
n Siuan, p.	*Takashima-Takakane*, p.
painters	
lptured vault of Kin-Yong-Kouan 345)	
Tsan (1301–74), p.	

Date	Byzantium and Islam
13th century, 2d half	
	Mosque of Kalaoun, Cairo (1284)
	A. Minarets of El Hakun, Cairo (1303) P. Mosque of Sultaneh (1304)
	B. Mosaics of Kahrie-Djami, Constantinople
	A. Generalife of Granada (1319)
	P. Mosque of Veramine (1322)
14th century, 1st half	Ra. Byzantine architecture B. Miniatures
	A. Restoration of the Alcazar of Seville (A. Court of the Lions at the Alhambra (1354

Italy	France
ain of Perugia (1277–80)	Cathedral of Rodez (1277–1535)
Nuovo, Naples (1279)	*Robert de Coucy* (?–1311), a. at Rheims
	Rocamadour (13th–14th centuries)
zo Pubblico, Piacenza (1281)	*Bernard de Castanet*, a. of the cathedral of Alb.
zo Pubblico, Perugia (1281–1383)	(1282–1383–1512)
io (1240–99), Umbrian, p.	
dral of Orvieto (1285–1309)	
bue (1240–1302), Florentine, p.	*Etienne Bonneuil*, French a. of the cathedral o.
zo Pubblico of San Gimignano (1288–1323)	Upsala, Sweden (1287)
zo Pubblico of Siena (1289–1305)	*Villard d'Honnecourt*, a. of the cathedral o. Kashan in Hungary (1290–1382)
Croce, Florence (1294)	
ea Tafi, (1250–1320), Florentine, p.	
zzo Vecchio, Florence (1298–1593)	
o Torriti, Roman mosaicist	
anni Pisano (1250–1328), Pisan s.	
	Honoré, illuminator
o Gaddi (1259–1327), Sienese p.	Paintings in the cathedral of Cahors
cio (126?–1339), Sienese p.	
nzo Maitani (1275–1330), Sienese a.	Pont Valentré at Cahors (1308)
	Spire of Saint Pierre, Caen (1308)
ch of San Niccolo, Treviso (1310)	Castillet of Perpignan (1310)
	Girard d'Orléans (?–1331), p.
tto di Bondone (1266–1337), Florentine p.	Cathedral of Famagouste, Cyprus
d a.	
di Camaino (?–1337), Sienese s.	
zzo Pubblico of Montepulciano	
lo Palmerucci (1280–1345), Umbrian p.	*Guillaume de Cucuron*, a. of the Château des
rea Pisano (1273–1349), Pisan s.	Papes, Avignon (1316–70)
ione Martini (1285–1344), Sienese p.	Church of Saint Ouen, Rouen (1318–39)
brogio Lorenzetti (?–1348), Sienese p.	
roni Palace, Florence	*Jehan Pucelle*, illuminator
tle of Sarzana (1322)	*Jehan Pepin*, image-maker
ro Lorenzetti (?–1348), Sienese p.	Château of Roquetaillade
niatures	Miniatures
Talmaco, Sienese p.	Enamelers of Limoges
stle of Nux (1330)	
urch of the Frari, Venice (1330–71)	Hotel de Ville, St. Quentin (1331–1509)
	Church of Saint Lo (14th, 15th and 16th centuries)
Giovanni e Paolo, Venice (1333–90)	Arras tapestries
mpanile of Florence (1334–87)	Donjon of Vincennes (1337–70)
ro Cavallini, Roman p.	Donjon of Chambois (14th, 16th and 18th centuries)
po Memmi (?–1356), Sienese p.	
	Ramparts of Avignon
stle of Sermione	
tress of Volterra (1343)	*Mathieu d'Arras*, a. of the cathedral of Prague
deo Gaddi (1300–66), Florentine p.	(1344–85)
o Pisano (?–1368), Florentine s.	
falini castle at Citta di Castello	
dge of Castel Vecchio, Verona	
	Cathedral of Mende
drea da Firenze (?) p. of the Spanish Chapel, Florence (1355)	

Date	England
13th century, 2d half	
	Exeter Cathedral (1280–1394)
	Henry de Elreton, a. of the Castle of Carr (1283) and of the Castle of Conway
	Castle of Beaumaris
	Windsor Castle
	Warwick Castle (14th and 15th centuries)
14th century, 1st half	Miniatures
	Guildhall of Coventry (14th and 15th turies)
	Gloucester Cathedral (1351–1412)

..NDERS AND THE NETHERLANDS	GEEMANY AND SCANDINAVIA
	Castle of Reichenberg (1281)
	S. Ramparts of Visby (Gotland Island)
Binnenhof at The Hague	
	Erwin von Steinbach (?–1318), a. of Strassburg
	Foundation of the castle of Heidelberg (1294)
edral of Malines (13th century to 42)	*Frauenlob.* The Meistersinger
	Wenzel von Klosternenburg, a. of the cathedral of Vienna (1300–1510)
	Rathaus of Stralsund
niatures. Tapestries	Miniatures
	Rathaus of Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle) (1333–50)
hurch of Hal (1341–1409)	
	Church of Thann (1351–1421–1516)
ean Appelmans (?–1398), a. of the cathedral of Antwerp (1352–1449–1592)	Palace of Prague (1353)
	Frauenkirche, Nuremberg, (1355–61)

Date	Spain and Portugal	History
13th century, 2d half		
		Mongol dynasty of *Yuen* in China (128
		The Sicilian Vespers (1282)
		Voyages of *Marco Polo* (1271–95)
	Pl. Castle of Leiria	
	Jayne Fabre, a. of the cathedral of Barcelona (1298–1448)	
		Dante Alighieri (1265–1321)
		The Pope at Avignon (1305)
	Marzal, p.	
		Destruction of the Templars (130?–14)
	Henri de Narbonne, French a. of the cathedral of Gerona (1312–1416–1581)	Franco-Flemish Wars (1302–28)
14th century, 1st half		
	Miniatures	The Thousand and One Nights
		The Aztecs found Tenochtitlan (Mexico)
	Cathedral of Palencia (14th and 15th centuries)	
		Ashikaga Shogunate in Japan (1336)
		Beginning of the Hundred Years' War (1
		The plague in Florence (1348)
		Petrarch (1304–74)
	Alcazar of Segovia (1352–58)	
		Ruysbroeck (1294–1381)
		Boccaccio (1313–75)

Date	India, Etc. and Americ,
14th century, 2d half	Am. Mexican monuments (?)

Date	China	Japan
	Iouang-Kong-Wang, p.	
	Mussulman bronzes	
	Reorganization of the imperial porcelain works of King-t-tō-chen (1369)	
14th century, 2d half		
	Tang-Yuan-tchang (1334–1407)	
	Iron pagoda of K'ai-fong fou (1383)	
		Meitshio (1351–1431), p.

Byzantium and Islam	Italy
sque of Hassan, Cairo (1356)	Palazzo Pretorio, Pistoia Castle of Vincinglista (Tuscany) Baptistery of Pistoia (1359) Castle of Pavia (1360)
intings of Mount Athos	*Andrea Orcagna* (1329–68), Florentine p. *Barna* (?–1381), Sienese p.
iniatures	Frescoes of the Campo Santo, Pisa Venetian palaces
Byzantine architecture	*Giottino*, Florentine p. *Agnolo Gaddi* (1333–96), Sienese p.
	Boninno da Campione (?–1396), s. of the Scaliger mausoleum, Verona (1365)
	Loggia dei Lanzi, Florence (1376)
	J. d'Avanzo, Altichieri ps. of Verona *Antonio Veneziano*, Venetian p.
	Bartolo di Fredi (1330–1410), Sienese p.
	Spinello Aretino (1333–1410), Florentine p.
	Bartolino da Novara, a. of the Castle of Ferrara (1385.)
	Matteo da Campione (?–1396), a. of the cathedral of Milan (1387)
	San Petronio, Bologna (1390)
	J. and P. delle Massegne, Venetian ss.
Mosque of Shah-Sindeh at Samarcand (1392)	Castle of Mantua (1395–1406) Certosa of Pavia (1396–1553)
	Cathedral of Como (1396–1487)
Mosque of Barbouk, Cairo (1398)	Nicola d'Arezzo (?–1420), Florentine s.
	Cennino Cennini publishes *The Book of Art*

Date	France	England
	Jean Coste, p.	
	Jehan Ravy, Jehan Le Bouteillier, ss. of Notre Dame de Paris	Fontaines Abbey
	Church of Chaise-Dieu	
	Cathedral of Montpellier	William of Wykeham (?–1404), chester Cathedral (1366–1486)
4th century, 2d half	The Bastille (1370) *André Beauneveu*, s. and p.	Melrose Abbey
	Miniatures. Tapestries *Nicolas Bataille* (1330–99), tapestry weaver	
	Raymond du Temple, a.	New College, Oxford (1379)
	Towers of La Rochelle	
		Church of St. Giles, Edinburgh (I
	Ramparts of Saint Malo (14th–16th–18th centuries)	
	Château of Pierrefonds (1390)	
	Jean d'Orléans (1305–1408), p.	
		Bodiam Castle (1396)
	Wood-engraving (?)	

ERS AND THE NETHERLANDS	GERMANY AND SCANDINAVIA
	Wilhelm von Erle (?–1378), p. of Cologne Rathaus of Dantzig (14th–16th centuries) Bridge of Prague (1358–1507)
Sandol, p. of Bruges	Rathaus of Breslau
	Theodorich, Tchech, p.
	Santa Maria, Cracow (14th–16th centuries)
	Church of Rothenburg (1373–1471)
tures. Tapestries de Ville of Bruges (1376–1421)	Miniatures
	Cathedral of Ulm (1377)
	Peter von Gmünd, a. of the church of Kuttenberg (1380)
hior Brœderlam, p. of Ypres	Der Schoene Brunnen, Nuremberg, (1385–96)
de Baerze, Flemish s.	
ux Sluter, Dutch s.	
	Bertram von Minden, p. of Hamburg

Date	Spain and Portugal	History
		The Jacquerie in France (1358)
		Bertrand du Guesclin (1320–80)
		Hafiz (?–1388), Persian poet
14th century, 2d half		*Wiclif* (1324–84) *Chaucer* (1328–1400)
		The Great Ordinance of *Etienne Marcel* Return of the Popes to Rome (1377) Uprising of the Ciompi, Florence (1378)
	Cathedral of Palma (1380) Cathedral of Oviedo (1380–1528)	
		Union of Flanders and Burgundy (1384)
	Pl. *Af Domingues* (?–1402), a. of the monastery of Batalha (1388) *Jayme Castayls*, p.	
	Pl. Palace of Cintra (14th and 15th centuries)	
	Cathedral of Pampeluna (1397)	Accession of the *Ming*s in China (1396) *Tamerlane* (1333–1405). The Mongols in India *John Huss* (1369–1415)

HISTORY OF ART

RENAISSANCE ART

LEONARDO DA VINCI. Mona Lisa, drawing. (*Musée de Chantilly.*)

ELIE FAURE

HISTORY OF ART

RENAISSANCE ART

TO MY MOTHER

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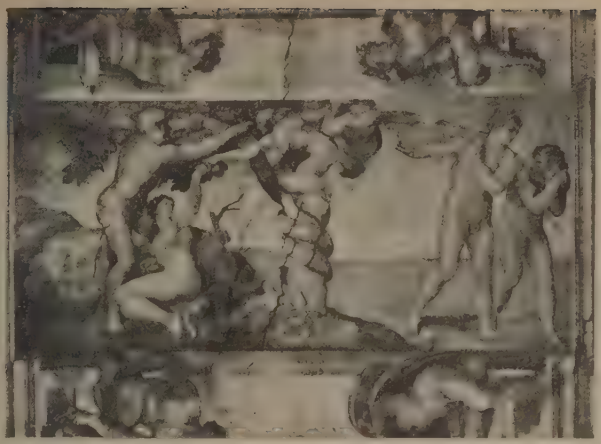
AUTHOR'S NOTE

THE criticism was made, when the first edition of this work was published, that it was illustrated with "details" taken from the works of the masters rather than with the works themselves. This criticism would be justified —each work forming an ensemble from which, in principle, nothing should be cut away—if, in the case of certain pictures, the reduction to the size of a page did not deprive the character of the work of its whole appeal to the senses. Have not books been published wherein the "Marriage at Cana" was reduced to the size of the half of a visiting card? And besides, is it not already admitted that one may detach a statue from the porch of a cathedral in order to illustrate a book with it, and that the reproduction of the apse of that cathedral may give a more correct idea of its character than an illustration, too greatly reduced in size, of the cathedral itself? There is no question, in such a book as I have intended this to be, of describing the pictures by the masters under consideration; the problem is one of expressing the spirit of the ensemble of their work. I do not comment upon the picture through the text; I justify the text through the picture or through a fragment of the picture.



MICHAEL ANGELO. The Fall of Man. (*Sistine Chapel, Rome.*)

INTRODUCTION

WE lived for two or three centuries with a feeling that the Italian Renaissance brought us back, for our consolation, into the lost path of ancient art, and that before the Renaissance and outside of it there was nothing but barbarism and confusion. When our need to love them caused us to regard passionately the work left by the artists who, in the last days of the Middle Ages, preceded the Italian dawn, we misunderstood and slandered Italy. We reproached her for the influence that she exercised upon the peoples of the Occident; we refused to see that these peoples, after the temporary exhaustion of their spiritual resources, had to submit to the common law and demand of newer elements that which would fertilize their mind. We are so made that it is very difficult for us to place ourselves outside of history in order to consider it from afar, and so, too easily, we attribute a definitive value to the feel-

ings which our present desires dictate to us. The need for the absolute, in which lie our suffering and our strength and our glory, is also something that we refuse to recognize in men who took a different path from our own in order to satisfy that need.

When men have invoked the spirit of their own race in order to condemn the influence of Italy because of the errors into which she led imitators unworthy to assimilate her teaching, it was in reality Michael Angelo or Titian who was being accused of belonging to his own race and of not having been born in the thirteenth century in northern Europe. If we listened to the Italian heroes, it was because they came at the hour when our instinct required them. The spirit of the north and of the Occident had flowed back upon the Italy of the Middle Ages, menacing her individuality and at the same time introducing into her the elements that were indispensable for her resurrection. It was necessary that the energy of Italy should assume an appearance of insurrection in order to reject everything that she did not recognize as human and constant in those elements which she received from abroad, and in order that she might give back to the north the impetus which she had received from the north, at the hour when the latter should call for her aid. If the imprint which she left upon the north was a deep one, if it still remains, it is that the great effort put forth in the Middle Ages by the peoples across the Alps and the Rhine had almost exhausted them. And it is also that Italy brought to the world an instrument of investigation that had lain forgotten for twelve centuries and to which our fragment of humanity had still to resort in order not to succumb. With its last breath, the social rhythm, which had found its realization in the Occidental Commune

and which had expressed itself with such a coherent and anonymous force through the Cathedral and the Nibelungen Lied, was now demanding of the individual that he arise from the midst of the crowds to subject the work of the crowds to his criticism, and to discover in them, in himself, and in the external universe the materials of a new rhythm in which the crowds might one day define themselves, recognize themselves, and find again, for a century or for an hour, the sense of collective action.

The invention of printing did not, as Victor Hugo said, kill the architecture of the ogive. At most it hastened its death slightly. When Gutenberg invented the press, Masaccio and the van Eycks had for ten or fifteen years been pointing out to the painters their new path, and in France all the churches which were being built were so strained in their effect that the architectural elements were rushing to dissociation. Nicolas Froment, Jehan Foucquet, and Enguerrand Charonton were beginning to paint. The invention of printing was due to the same causes as was the decadence of the art that built the edifices in which the whole crowd had a share. The decomposition of architectural unity corresponded with the work of analysis which was beginning to divide the social body, and the liberation of the arts and sciences and the irresistible and sudden rise of sculpture, painting, music, literature, and printing announced the substitution of individual research for the great spontaneous creation in which the newly aroused and magnificent energy of the peoples had for two or three hundred years been summarizing their needs.

What drew our attention toward Italy for so long a time, what made us misunderstand the work of individ-

ualization which was going on at the same time in France, in Germany, in Flanders, in England, and in Spain, was that this work in the north and in the west was performed without a halt, because the statue descended from the niche and the painting from the stained-glass window without the artist's ceasing to look at the abandoned temple, even while he moved away from it. In Italy, on the contrary, the individualization of the creative energies found admirable tools ready to hand for the work of self-assertion. And there were men for the task, those who for two centuries had been prepared by civil war and by the violence of their passions, even as they had been prepared for this search for their personal law by the character of the soil which had been forming them since the beginning of their history. All the peoples of Europe gave way before Italy's investigation or adopted it, for the reason that Italy undertook her investigation with a mind freer and more mature than theirs. If they did not always understand the conclusions that were reached, it is not Italy that should be held responsible. Moreover, we are young, and we still look to the future. What she gave us of life will live again when we live again.

This more or less gradual or more or less brutal passage from collective expression to individual expression was not new. History is like a heart that beats—like a fist that opens and closes. At certain hours, popular energy, having reached its summit and requiring full freedom of action, demands momentary concentration into a vast symphonic ensemble of all the moral, religious, and social ideas which, before that time, had been scattered among a few minds that were ahead of their time. This is the prodigious moment when the certitude of living in the absolute and of fixing it in our

souls produces a flash of lightning amid the expanse of darkness, and it is this that lifts up a whole people to the unknown god dwelling within it, while it remains all unconscious of what has occurred. This is the wonderful moment when the individual effaces himself, when all the members of a crowd react at the same time to external forces, when great buildings spring forth from the earth, willed by all, built by all, and subordinating to their social function all the isolated expressions through which men only a day before were seeking to define themselves separately. Egypt, in its ensemble, reached this hour several times in the course of its long life and was able to prolong the hour more than any other people because it was Egypt that opened history and because she proceeded slowly in almost absolute isolation; but even so there were centuries of doubt and hesitation at intervals, and of analysis that is obscure to us because we are too far away to comprehend it perfectly. Chaldea undoubtedly knew this hour, India —nearer to us—lived through it in her frightful intoxication. It was the frenzied and ecstatic dream of Islam. China tried to prolong it within herself for three thousand years. Greece swept rapidly through her hour and left her trace of fire across history. The earliest Doric temples reveal the rapid rise toward this summit of domination which was reached by the anonymous sculptor of Olympia and by Æschylus at the same time, while Phidias began to lean toward its other slope.

But the anonymous sculptor of Olympia and Phidias were already powerfully characterized individuals. Amid the procession of the people marching toward the Parthenon, the voice of Æschylus, one of the most pious voices, was heard above the others, and in his brain he bore Prometheus, who was to attempt to ravish the

flame from the altar. Since the beginning of history, never had the individual so strongly claimed the right to place his thought at the service of men who did not understand him. By way of these implacable successions of analyses and syntheses[1] which the evolution of the mind imposes upon us like voyages through hell and sojourns in Paradise, we achieve partial syntheses and partial analyses which correspond to momentary triumphs of classes or of tendencies in the social organism. The Greek synthesis, which doubtless attained its strongest expression at some time between the poems of Homer and the Medean wars, was a short stage in the course of the long analysis which separated the decline of the old Oriental civilizations from the obscure beginnings of the modern civilizations. But it was the decisive stage which determined the future.

In any case, the philosophic and æsthetic activity in which it culminated seemed forever to dissociate the elements of human energy, and when it had introduced into the world the terrible ferments of reason and liberty, the world seemed condemned never to recover the profound harmony in which all men meet and in which the social rhythm submerges all the individual rhythms. It is true that painting has revealed to us almost nothing of what the soul of the ancients confided to it as it wandered in search of itself; and yet painting is *par excellence* the plastic instrument of the individual, through its infinite suppleness, its obedience to every change of direction, to every leap, to every flash of light, to every shadow of the mind as well as through its faculty for binding together the most complex relationships. Sculpture is still a social art which has to produce in space a block closed on all sides—it must

[1] The Saint-Simonians called them critical and organic periods.

therefore respond to clearly constructed philosophic ideas, and when it was torn from the temple, it could not do otherwise than betray to us the disquietude, the doubt, the dispersion and irremediable disorder of the social body itself; it could not fail to let us foresee the coming of a new world, even though it did not indicate to us the true direction of that world. Be that as it may, the Hellenic analysis so disintegrated the old world that it seemed to be going down forever, and it had to appeal first to the Jews and then to the barbarians in order that, in a new territory, it might once more lay the foundation for a social rhythm, which did not culminate until seventeen centuries after the time of the Parthenon—with the Commune of the Occident, the French cathedral, the popular poems of Germany, and the market of the Flemings.

The Renaissance owes its name to the fact that it expressed an hour of our history analogous to that one of which Euripides and Praxiteles lived the first and most decisive moments. Only, we are better able to grasp the plastic manifestations of it. There remains to us something else than the dissolving and sacred thought of the philosophers who affirmed its character—Rabelais, Montaigne, and Erasmus, in whom Socrates and his disciples would not have recognized themselves, but who, in the reverse sense, and in their relation with the mediæval world, played the rôle that Socrates and his disciples had played respecting the ancient world. There remains to us something else than the anarchic architecture to which it gave rise in Italy. It has left us painting, an individual work, it is true, but objective, even so, and one that could not endure except that it express a living continuity in the brain of the artist, and no longer, like the arts that precede it, in the

anonymous instinct of a collectivity. It is especially through painting that we know why the Renaissance was necessary to us and why we love it. We know why we shall not cease to be grateful to the great individuals who gathered up into their soul the soul of the crowds that had disappeared, in order to transmit their hopes to the crowds that were to come. For it is they who pass on the torch. It is they who are the bond of union between the general needs that men no longer feel and the general needs that they will feel again one day—between the organism of yesterday and the organism of to-morrow. They are in themselves a crowd, and the continuity of sentiment that bound men to men found its refuge in their hearts. The Michael Angelo of the Sistine, Rubens, Rembrandt, and Velasquez are, more clearly than the writers, the scientists, or the philosophers, the individual symphonies which, in critical periods, collected the elements of the people's symphony that, for the moment, had been scattered to all the winds of sensation and the mind. One can love them with a love equal to that which one feels for the abandoned temple. Between a cathedral window and a picture by Titian there is the distance that separates an admirable voice in the most beautiful popular choir from a symphony by Beethoven.

It is this that gives to those who arise here and there, to hold up the columns of the temple with their titanic effort, the appearance of being in radical opposition to their surroundings. They seem ill adapted to the society in which they are because they have within them the grand rhythm—invisible to the blind multitudes—of the adaptations to come. They broke dead rhythms to create new rhythms. They are the more solitary the higher they rise and the more complex,

universal, permanent, and profound, are the elements of life that are brought into activity by the symphonies which they hear in the silence of their hearts.

But since a social synthesis is the secret goal of their effort, since men are joyful when their purpose is realized, since pessimism occurs only in the rare minds that suffer through their loneliness, and since optimism is the fruit of communion among men, how is it that when this divine communion has been achieved, how is it, I repeat, that men cannot safeguard it? The reason is that no society could resist the general stagnation which the maintenance of this communion would bring about. The reason is that life is nothing else but effort. And the balance of the elements that compose it is never a static realization, but always a tendency; or at least, the instant in which the balance is effected is too imperceptible for us to be able to arrest it otherwise than through the works which spring forth at that moment from our hearts.

This dynamic equilibrium, ever destroyed, ever restored, which it is impossible to maintain but which engenders a hope that we cannot stifle, this repose which we pursue with the desire of attaining it and with the presentiment that we shall lose it immediately, could not be prolonged unless the social organs adapt themselves in a spontaneous, close, and yet mobile manner to economic and moral conditions whose evolution never ceases. But very soon there comes a moment when the appearance of new peoples and new methods, of unforeseen discoveries, and of currents of external ideas disturbs the balance of the scales, when one of the organs tends to grow at the expense of the other, when the narrow egoism of one class, of one caste, or of some particular group of individuals gains possession

of the work of the others for its own profit, and arouses, among those others, isolated forces which will sprout little by little in minds adapted to the search for the law of a new equilibrium. The unequal distribution of wealth, the needs that it develops, and the groupings of interests that it necessarily creates have doubtless been, up to the present, the most visibly active factor of the social dissociations which we observe in history. At the same time, through the aristocracies of culture which it helped to form, it was preparing the ground for the future associations of the very elements that it separated one from another. It has always been believed that luxury exercised a favorable influence on the development of art. In reality, the relationship which certainly exists between luxury and art has given to wealth the advantage of a rôle that it has never possessed. The intellectual forces of a people are born of the effort from which spring, with these forces, the wealth of individuals, and the power of radiation, and expansion of the collectivity. At the hour when these forces become conscious of themselves, architecture is dead and sculpture dies. If the aristocracies of wealth avail themselves of the flowering of literature and more especially of painting, it is also they who bring the arts into contempt, even as the acquiring of riches destroys the power of a people by raising up around it organs of isolation and defense which end by crushing it. The only wealth of mankind is action.

As a matter of fact, the influence of Italy was arrested when Italy had become the house of pleasure for Europe, as the influence of Greece had come to an end at the moment when Athens, grown rich, was no longer considered good for anything by those who had just conquered her save to teach them and to amuse them.

That was enough. To France, who was broken by war and whose formidable effort had twisted and dislocated the limbs and the backbone of the great ogival nave, Italy had indicated a path of regeneration. And along this path France was to gather up powerful instruments with which to emancipate herself. To the Shakespearean cycle she had furnished an inexhaustible treasury of sensations, ideas, and images, a mirror which the breath of the north blurred so that the soul of its poets should not be able to find in it the limits of its mystery. She had prepared the way for the all-powerful hero of painting who was to appear in Flanders at the beginning of the seventeenth century and was to stir the whole world by opening the gates of the modern epoch. He did so when he poured into the single mold of southern rhythms the abounding matter of the flat countries where the mist and the rain take on the color of the sun. And although the protest that the reformers made against the moral dissolution of Italy gave to Germany's political insurrection a character of antagonism toward the Renaissance of the south, it was the example of Italy which permitted them, later on, to arouse the individual forces that were needed by their country.

The search for social equilibriums occurs in space—across the face of the earth, as well as in time—throughout the course of history; and the conditions of that search change according to the economic and geographical circumstances which rendered it indispensable. The countries of the north of Europe, in their relation with the countries of the south, had to experience a reaction which may fairly be compared with that which the Jewish people had attempted against the influence of the Greek people. The exaltation of the intellectual

and sensual qualities of men gave way suddenly before the qualities which had been insisted upon by the Jewish prophets. This is, at least, an outline of the significance which, in the mind of those thinkers who expressed it, is to be attributed to the movements of which we have been speaking, movements which are too complex and too profound for us to be able to gather up their political and social meaning into a single formula. The universal character of primitive Christianity and its demand for an inner discipline imposed on the barbarians of the north and the west of Europe bonds which were necessary for the restraining and utilization of their unemployed energy. The Reformation, in its turn, or at least the movement that culminated in the Reformation, permitted them to recover their personality, which was being compromised in the course of time by the progressive invasion of Latin idealism, and to free their economic activity from the domination of Rome. If the outer form which the religious and political powers of Germany gave to the agitation for reform stifled the spiritual powers released by the Renaissance, it was to revive with the great music in the genius of the north, which had been freed and enabled to pour its formidable life into the soul of the men of the future.

Whatever the violations of the innocence of man committed by Catholicism and the Protestant sects, we must accept them as necessary social secretions from which, during centuries, the man of the south and the man of the north have derived what they needed for the establishment of a balance with the natural and moral surroundings in which their life was passed. The individualism in matters of passion of the southern peoples imposed upon them the need for a social frame-

work of a powerfully hierarchic character; in this, all their unrest and all their inner conflicts could find an exact solution and, in case of need, appeal for the support of an immutable force from without. The naturally social character of the peoples of the north, where the harder struggle for existence and the more continuous effort render man necessary to man at every moment, called for a lever from within which should stir the moral nature. In the century when the Germanic genius and the Italian genius expanded in a supreme burst of energy, we shall see the painters who represent the two countries considering form from almost opposite points of view. On the one hand, there are frescoes on the walls, made to be seen by all. On the other hand, we find isolated works, belonging to brotherhoods or ordered by donors. On the one hand, we find artists more powerfully individualized because the multitude around them is anarchic and passionate, and they unite the spirit which is scattered through the crowd by raising up an ideal, generalizing a hierarchic image of nature. On the other hand, artists who are scarcely liberated from the collective instinct of the Middle Ages divide up the common spirit by particularizing all the aspects of nature which they see confused and in detail and all on the same plane. Rubens, the man of the north and a Catholic, will bring about a momentary harmony between the soul of Michael Angelo and the soul of Dürer.

But the world will have to wait for him for a hundred years. Until we reach him and despite the incessant borrowing from Italy of the peoples of the north, despite the fact that Italy sought from the colorists of Flanders advice the evidence of which is less easy to discover, there was, between the spirit of the north and

the spirit of the south, a kind of antagonism which was necessary to the effort of the world and which, doubtless, will not disappear until the day when, the unity of Europe having been effected, more numerous and widely separated groups will confront their desires. The thin landscapes of the south, their transparence, the sober and precise lines which arrest them in the intelligence and which engender in us clear ideas and essential relationships permitted the great Italians to create an intellectual interpretation of nature which, from the sculptors of Egypt to Michael Angelo, and from Phidias to Titian, has changed only in appearance, and tends to summarize universal life in the human form, as purified as the mind itself from the accidental surroundings which limit, and imperfections which encompass, it. The landscapes of the north, engulfed in mists and buried under leaves, are marked by a confusion which disturbs us with vague sensations of a tangle of images—powerless to organize themselves into ideas. And this was the force that opened to the artists of the northern countries the gates of a mystery in which the forms float and seek one another and make it impossible for sentiment to eliminate and to choose. The men of one group, by reducing nature to an arbitrarily settled harmony, raised man up to be a god; the other group mingled men with life in general by considering nature as a blind symphony in which consciousness is lost in the whirl of sounds, forms, and colors. Hence the spiritual exaltation of those who, the better to seize the higher destiny of man, forgot his misery and their own suffering and saw him forever ascending; hence the humanity of those who, each time that they turned toward man, saw him cradled by the fraternal wave of matter, of ideas, and of movements. The anthropo-

morphism of the one group and the pantheism of the other have given to our mind the two poles of its power, between which it is perhaps condemned to move eternally and from which it derives desire and doubt, but also the will to action.

And what does doubt matter, and what does it matter that the desire is never quenched! What does it matter if we feel, escaping from us at every moment, that monstrous truth which we think to grasp at every moment and which ceaselessly flows out of us and beyond us, because it is living just as we are and because we create it every day and condemn it to death by the mere fact that we have wrested it from ourselves! What does it matter that there should be, from age to age, broken voices which tell us that we shall never know everything! That is our glory. Each time that we set to work, we know everything, because at the moment of creation there flow into us all the living forces of the world which we invoke and epitomize for the illumination of our spirit and the guidance of our hand. If our love for the Renaissance is so intoxicating, it is that our love consented to suffer in order to bring forth from the night those moving truths whose exhaustless power of creation we are barely beginning to perceive to-day, and this again is because they are inseparable from all the truths that ever were and all that are still to come. We shall not forget those invincible men who, when all the powers leagued together to bar their way, when their books were burned and their crucibles were smashed, when the ax and the sword were raised against them and the fagots were prepared for them around the stake, did not recoil from the task of discovering facts and ideas which each day broke down the equilibrium of soul that they

acquired so painfully, and who kept alive in themselves the effort necessary for other conquests. We shall not forget that when humanity, exhausted by the crisis of love through which it had just lived, uttered a cry of anguish, they hastened to lift up and console that love. We shall not forget that at the same hour, when a finger, which had until then pressed upon invisible lips, was lifted at some place, Keppler and Copernicus, with a single gesture, pushed back the sky beyond the very limits of the dream and of intuition; Columbus and Magellan opened up the great routes of the earth in order that it might be placed within our hands like a weapon of combat; Vésale and Michael Servetus seized upon the initial movements of life within our entrails; Shakespeare freed from theological uses the boundless poem that we bear within our hearts; Rabelais, Erasmus, and Montaigne affirmed that force is eternal and that doubt is necessary; Cervantes wrested the life of our idealism from all the evil paths of disappointments and mirages; and Italian art was slowly dying from the effort it had had to make in order to introduce order into the mind, and through order freedom.

RENAISSANCE ART

Withdraw and pray, while that I do
engage upon this unequal and perilous combat.

CERVANTES

FLORENCE

Chapter I. FLORENCE

I

PISA was vanquished—Pisa where the first architects and the first sculptors of Italy had arisen—Siena was reduced to a semi-voluntary silence, and the Florentine Republic was strongly defined in the face of the rival cities. And now Italian factionalism, which has been but slightly characterized during the chaos of the Middle Ages and which, moreover, has been restrained by a group of beliefs held in common and by the spiritual ascendancy of the Papacy—Italian factionalism is becoming more pronounced. On this burning soil, full of illustrious memories, the municipal spirit tends toward a political idea calculated to fortify still further the passionate indi-

vidualism which was to transform Europe. France is exhausting herself through the effort that she has put forth. The cathedral weakens and trembles on its too slender supports. It is not upon its soil, rendered sterile by an interminable war, and in the heart of an unhappy people that the elements of the shattered energy of Europe will be reborn. This rôle will belong to Flanders and to Italy.

JACOPO DELLA QUERCIA. Allegorical figure. (*Museum of Siena.*)

But these elements will not attain again their cohesion in Italy any more than in Flanders. Italian individualism does not understand bowing to the requirements of unity. When the arts in their association were expressing the multitude, they seemed to issue from one mind. They appeared divided and hostile when they expressed a single individual. Every Italian artist willingly took the title of architect, sculptor, and painter. But rarely did he speak with equal power the three languages to which he laid claim. Even after the mediæval spirit had everywhere dragged down the strength which had erected the monument representative of faith and of the city, Italy did not wholly cease producing architects. War was still agitating the republican cities, and over the flagstones

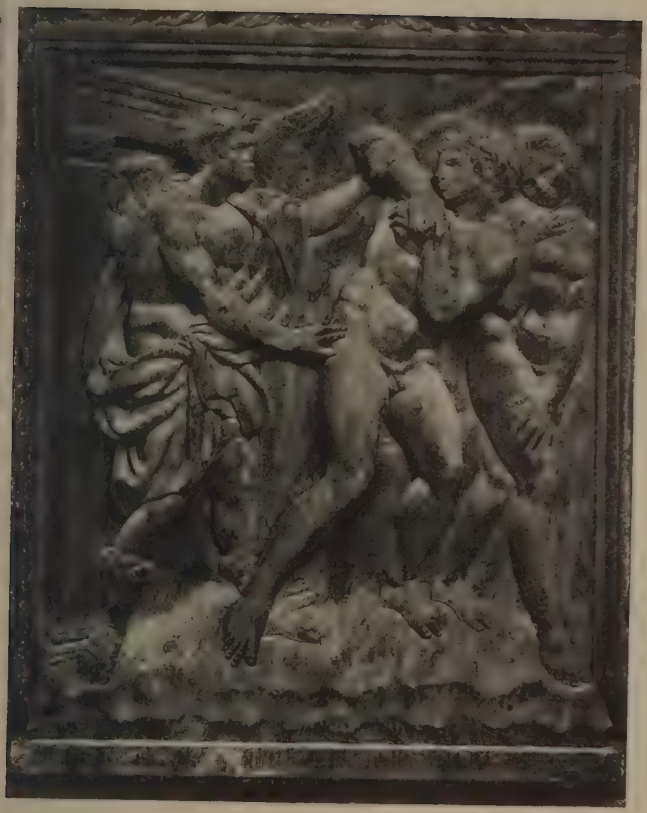
of the streets there was ever the necessity for those hard rectangular palaces, high and bare, that Brunelleschi erected to face the lacework of the churches, to assert, in defiance of the invading soul of the north, the survival of the Latin. She formed fewer sculptors. She saw the birth of so many painters that she seemed to have invented painting, and the memory of the deeds she wrought at this time has not yet ceased affecting us.

From the thirteenth century onward, painting expressed Italian individualism. The Sienese Gothics and Giotto and Cimabue were already making altar pictures or painting their decorations directly on the walls at a time

JACOPO DELLA QUERCIA. Charity.
(*Palazzo Communale, Siena.*)

when Frenchmen and Flemings had no other knowledge than that of stained glass or the illuminating of missals. When the Italian painters, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, asked the Flemish painters for the secrets of their technique, they did so because they felt that the language of painting was the one that had always been meant for them. As their natural genius forbade them borrowing from the Flemings anything but the external processes, and as nothing was known about the painting of antiquity, they were, from the first, as painters, themselves—and nothing but themselves. If they were influenced by the sculptors and the humanists, it was by way of so many commentaries and new temperaments that the influence reached them, so that it gave only a more marked character to their work.

The sculptors, on the contrary, claimed that their inspiration was drawn from the ancient works. Nicola Pisano had a collection of old sarcophaguses. His successors, Giovanni, Nanni di Banco, Jacopo della Quercia, Donatello, and Ghiberti were nourished at the warmest hearths of life that the world has ever known, and yet not one of them, whatever the freedom of his inspiration or the fresh vigor of his language, not one of them forgot that on this soil, a thousand years before, had arisen, cities of marble. When still a boy, thin and poor, Donatello followed Brunelleschi to Rome. There they lived like brigands, their hands hardened by the pick-ax and the spade; the wild vines and the fig trees were the ladders by which they scaled the walls in order to measure their opening and thickness; they passed whole days in the subterranean darkness of the old buried temples, and went mad when they had unearthed a column, a statue, or a cluster of four or five old stones.



JACOPO DELLA QUERCIA. Adam and Eve expelled from Paradise.
(*Cathedral of Bologna.*)

. . . Upon their return they understood better the reasons for their pride.

And so it was not the weight of the memories of antiquity that hampered the growth of sculpture in Italy. She felt too imperious a need of affirming her inner glory to consent to ask the ancient statue makers anything more than a mental discipline, whose chief effect was to accentuate her expressive power even while it attempted to overcome her. If, indeed, sculpture was never the chosen language of her artists, it was because it is difficult to isolate sculpture from the architecture that gives it birth, because in itself it is architecture, since it always responds to the social and religious life of a whole people in action, summarizing the general aspirations of that people when its temples are threatened. It has not the power to dissemble nor to choose; it is in space that it must live its impersonal life; defined on every side, it fails when it tries to hide forms from our eyes in order to impose other forms upon us and to pass from one set of forms to another by those imperceptible gradations, in the use of which painting excels. Too intense to remain quite the master of himself, too subtle to go straight to his object, the Italian never spoke, as the French or the Greeks did, that relentless language which forbids the imagination to go beyond the limits of logical planes and well-defined volumes.

Like his Roman ancestor who, when the sculptors brought Greek formulas to Rome, preserved the Latin spirit there only when he hollowed out his sarcophaguses or the walls of his arches of Triumph, the Italian artist did not really know how to work stone save when he approached the decorative bas-relief where light and shadow seize upon the form to bend it to the needs of

the sculptors. Sculpture and painting have always followed, step by step, the outbursts and the eclipses of the spirit of individualism. The least individualistic people of the ancient world, the Egyptians, treated painting itself as sculptors, seeing it only as profiles projected like flat shadows upon the walls. The most highly individualized people of the modern world, the Italians, treated sculpture as painters—Jacopo della Quercia being the possible exception. The Alexandrian bas-relief affirmed ancient individualism as the Italian bas-relief was to indicate to the artists the means of getting away from the sentiment held by the mass of the people, in order to found a new intellectual order. Whenever impersonal art becomes weak, sculpture passes into painting by the intermediary of the image carved on the walls.

Painting is the language of the uncertainties, the outbursts and the retreats of the heart. It is no longer the rebellious material whose wounds, once they are inflicted, are never to be concealed, and which obeys only him who can accept a great collective idea, whose soul moves with security in the closed circle of a social organism that seems unshakable. Stone dominates the mind; it is more ancient than the mind. Man has brought painting under the direction of the mind. It follows his hesitations and his meanderings and his progressions; it bounds or contracts or veils itself with him. It is the language of intellectual passion. It defines the individual.

Therefore, it is by painting especially that Italy has spoken to us. But even in this art she could not have more than a personal conception of the painted surface. The function of a superior mind is to tear the crowd away from its customary idols in order to impose on it

those idols which the ardor of his meditations gives to this mind the right and assigns the duty to pursue until death. The walls of the churches and of the municipal palaces alone are sufficiently in view and vast enough to appease the fever of the artist, the eagerness for sentiment of the spectator, and the pride of the

JACOPO DELLA QUERCIA. Monument of Maria del Caretto, detail. (*Cathedral of Lucca.*)

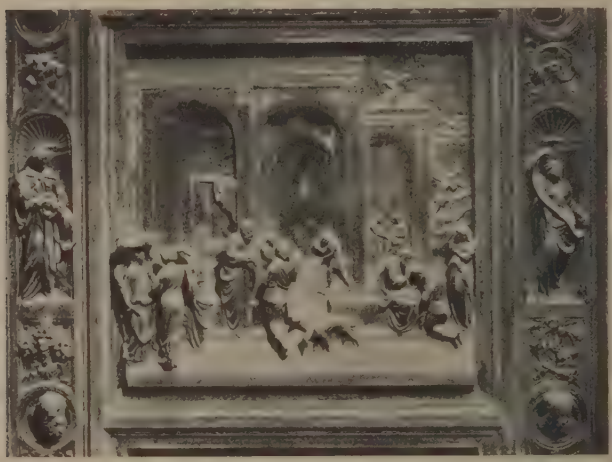
priest and the city. Fresco, which, moreover, was counseled by reason of the transparence of the Florentine atmosphere, the clearness of tones and contours, the bareness of Roman walls that had neither windows nor stained glass—fresco became the natural language of all the Tuscan painters. The old masters of the Middle Ages, Cimabue, Giotto, Duccio, Simone Martini, the Gaddis, the Lorenzettis, and Orcagna, scarcely knew any other. Cennino Cennini wrote an ingenuous and touching book about it. When the new awakening

comes, Angelico takes possession of it, Masaccio gives it an accent that no one after him can recover, and Michael Angelo makes of it a terrible instrument which causes the whole monument to quiver. It seems as if Andrea del Castagno, Filippo Lippi, Uccello, Ghirlandajo, and Luini are really themselves only through it and thanks to it. Antonio Pollaiuolo and Botticelli, above all, discover themselves in it, become proud and grave and simple as soon as they employ it, and recall, by the depth and purity of their accent, the character of life surprised like a shadow on the wall by the old Etruscan decorators. Fresco was born of a close collaboration between the artist and the mason. How many researches in common were needed, how many discouraging setbacks and bruised enthusiasms there were before the painter was acquainted with the qualities of his material, before he knew how to prepare it, to wait for it, and to seize the instant when it should demand that he deliver to it the final flower of his soul, which he had long been cultivating in his drawings and cartoons! They left their beds in the last hours of the night in order to paint before the sun should dry the walls; all day long they lived in feverish expectation of those admirable moments when they communed with the stone for the sake of the eternity of the spirit. The life of their passions was no more than the superior and tyrannical preparation for the mission to which they felt themselves called. They made of fresco a profound instrument from which they knew how to draw such dramatic accents that the flame of their hearts seems even now to set the walls on fire. There are neither hesitations nor alterations. In order for the damp mortar, in its gradual hardening, to be able to seize the color and crystallize it, to take a little of its splendor,

and to give it the earthy and dull beauty of the water and the stone with which it was incorporated, there was needed that sweeping rapidity of the Italian soul, which never retraces its steps, which is forever furious and goaded because it cannot outstrip itself. The especial character of fresco is its ability to fix the moment of passion in a material as solid as meditation.

II

Now, in fresco the moment of passion was prolonged even as the vibration of a string which continues after



Lorenzo Ghiberti. Gate of the Baptistery of Florence, detail.

the fingers have ceased to touch it, and recommences at a new touch just when the vibration is about to die away. From her long Christian education Florence had to liberate the desire that she felt within herself as she beheld the statues that had been unearthed, as she read

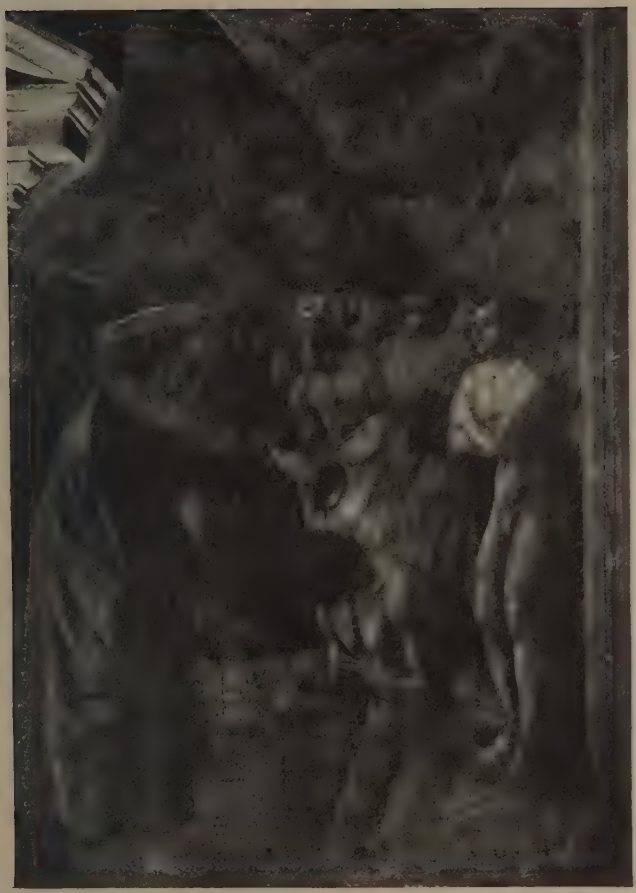
the ancient poets and philosophers, as she lifted her wild eyes to the rim of the mountains. The problem was to find the passage between the social ideal vainly sought by the Italy of the Middle Ages and the intellectual ideal toward which the Renaissance was tending. And that was the glory and the pain of the painting of the Tuscans.

For them this great century began with an indecision that lasted until the end. Of the strong and healthy joy of Giotto, cradling in his great undulating line the lofty certitudes on which all of mediæval society lived, nothing much remained. In the cloister, to be sure, away from the world, the belief in them persisted, but it took on the appearance of an illusion voluntarily accepted. The monk, Angelico, a vigorous builder, indeed, and who transmits to the great classics—in addition to the deviations and the weaknesses of the last primitives and the hesitations of the precursors of Raphael—the grand structural logic of Giotto, the monk, Angelico, never dreamed that he was celebrating Christianity somewhat as one illuminates a legend in the margin of an old book. This legend softened him, without doubt, and even amused him. The most terrible stories unrolled like a child's tale, and it was nearly always the gentlest of them that he selected. As he believed in hell, and as hell rumbled at the gates of his cloister, his inexhaustible imagination knew full well how to mingle and oppose dramatic crowds, how to cloud the heavens with arrows and lances, how to crush the feet and hands of the Saviour on the great cross around which suppliant forms were prostrated. But he was far more attracted by the visions of Paradise, with its lyres, violins and trumpets of gold, by the angels winged with multicolored plumes in the pure

striated landscapes of black cypress trees. His was a charming nature, happy in loving, happy in living, happy that there were flowers in the fields so that he might spread them under the feet of the young saints. Even the blood of the martyrs made white daisies grow in the reddened grass. He never failed to associate

Masolino da Panicale. St. Peter, detail of the fresco.
(*Church of the Carmine, Florence.*)

with his enchantment the springtime and the summertime of the Florentine countryside. He was too candid to perceive that he was enjoying painting for its own sake and that he loved the mother of Jesus with a love so delightful only because she had the exquisite countenance of a timid little virgin, because she wore a beautiful dress all of white and had an aureole of gold. He was not the first, certainly, to recount the Annunciation. The Sienese returned to it at every oppor-



MASACCIO. The Baptism, fresco. (*Church of the Carmine, Florence.*)

tunity. Only, among those greatest mystics, inclosed within a declining religion, the marvelous story seemed to come from a dead world, it had the odor of a withering flower and of the last breath of the incense. With Fra Angelico, on the contrary, a fresh and chaste humanity was entering into it gently. He was immersed to the shoulders in his century, but he saw hardly anything of it, for his two eyes were turned away from its violent visions and saw little else but flowering meadows, blond hair, embroidered robes, and the heavens resplendent with stars; he heard scarcely anything of his century, for he knew how to close his ears against its tumult in order to listen to the harps and the pretty voices of the singers. It was a most delicate bride whose hand he took to lead her to the new world. As she awaited the burning embrace of the heroes who were approaching, it was from him that she recovered the innocence so necessary to her. Italy had been struggling for two centuries to wash her clean of the original sin. The purifiers of the world had

Masaccio. Adam and Eve expelled from Paradise. (*Church of the Carmine, Florence.*)

been outraging her for so long that at the hour when life overflowed in men's hearts, those among them who were to recreate woman for the future turned to her with their terrible adoration. For two thousand years she had been forgotten or besmirched! They asked pardon of her with frenzied sobs, on their knees, lifting their hands toward her and not daring to lift their eyes. All his life Dante remained faithful to a dead woman. All his life Petrarch loved a living woman whom he had no desire to possess. Giotto spoke of women with so much tenderness that it is in the arms, in the hands, and in the bended knees of the mothers and wives that he detected the parting of all the animate curves which attached the forms to the center of the human drama. When the monk half opened the door of his cloister to observe women as they passed, the crystal voice of the Florentine bells entered with the breath of the roses, and both the monk and the women were purified. Truly their love was an innocent one. They wondered at everything, at themselves, at the things that were told them, at the pink-and-white houses, at the terraced hills, and at the idea that there could be tears and tragedies when nature was so delightful and when the miracle proclaimed was so simple and so touching. The poets of the Middle Ages had effaced from their hearts the memory of the ancient evils, and as both of them were ignorant of love, they did not know that they were to suffer again. And yet, only a few steps away from the Beato Angelico, life's experience was beginning again. While in the light and the silence of which his pale harmonies were, so to speak, the perfume, he was painting the lawns full of flowers and the little virgins who always kept their hands crossed on their bosoms, Masaccio was working, in a dark church,

to cover an almost invisible wall with the drama of conscience which defines in advance the activity of the critical centuries opened by the Florentines.

To be exact, Masaccio was not the first of his line. It was in Siena, the mystic land, the focus of the most pro-

Fra Angelico. Ecstasy of St. Francis. (*Museum of Berlin.*)

nounced discord between the evolution of the world and the traditions of faith, that the sculptor Jacopo della Quercia had uttered the cry of alarm which Masaccio himself certainly heard. The work seems of a singular maturity when one knows it to be the very first, before that of Angelico, before that of Masaccio, before that of Donatello, and before that of Masolino da Panicale, the painter who so disturbs us by the pictures he left in Masaccio's chapel some years before the time of the

latter artist. Jacopo's work is about contemporaneous with the extraordinary effort of Ghiberti in decorating the bronze doors of the Baptistery of Florence. It is even broader, and were it not for its august ruggedness one would think that it had come a hundred years after Angelico. Thanks to Giovanni Pisano, sculpture had taken a great lead and could express its drama more forcibly than the painters who were still encumbered with imagery and with Byzantinism, and who were incapable of rising above school formulas and traditional prejudices, as Giotto had done. One might think this work a powerful sketch for the tragedy of the Sistine and the Tomb of the Medici. Whether Jacopo was decorating the fountain on the Piazza del Municipio, whether he was carving on the façade of San Petronio at Bologna the figure of Adam digging in the ground or Eve driven from Paradise after the innocent and formidable drama of the first love, we already get violent figures with frowning brows, heads borne by necks as a weapon is borne by an arm, contracted and muscular hands clasping an indomitable child, and the spirited movement of torsos and flanks and breasts created to shield and to nourish all the joys and all the ills of the world—the cry of an angry prophet. The highest human symbolism was uniting the soul with the form. The eternal subject, the one that the Jewish poets wrested from the anecdote to install it until the end of time in the very mechanism of our minds, the unchanging story of man as he opens his eyes to life, as he wills to interrogate life, as he is wounded by life and condemned to interrogate it more deeply so as to dress that wound even while he inflicts others on himself—the eternal subject blossomed from the stone. The spirit of the artist and the spirit of the stone itself

FRA ANGELICO. The Annunciation, fresco.
(*San Marco, Florence.*)

fused in the flash of the great lyric intuition through which the motionless laws of universal harmony accord with the most ingenuous and the most egoistic sentiment of our sorrows, of our cares, and of our daily work.

Fra Angelico. The Crucifixion, detail. (*Museum of San Marco, Florence.*)

Jacopo della Quercia did not dream that the monotonous tragedy, which we are led to accept as a cruel need when we question it continuously and deeply, could cause silly tears to flow and draw forth moralizing protests against the implacable destiny that we bear in our hearts from the day of our birth. He accepted the human drama, and the human drama accepted brought

him his recompense. A terrible force dwelt in his sculptured stones, the profound sentiment of primitive men expressed itself by the full form that the world assumes in its periods of expansion, thus increasing its majesty tenfold. He was already master of his great soul. His expressive surfaces sensed the long silences; beside him Donatello seems contracted with pain and Michael Angelo convulsed by fury and disgust. When he lays a dead person on the slab of a funerary statue, he knows how to bring to the forehead the appearance of positive peace, and the work takes on tragic grandeur because one feels that passion has been arrested by the planes of the marble at every leap of the heart and of the hand. And withal, he had already leaped over the gate of hell, had left all hope behind. He outstripped his whole century to arrive, with a single bound, at the conclusion of Michael Angelo, and no one understood him.

Masaccio, on the contrary, immersed in a milieu more alive and more mobile, seizing hold, from the first, of that tool, painting, by which Italian genius best expresses itself, and dying, a mystery, at twenty-seven, was destined by his very hesitations to act much more directly upon the mind of his time. That which he defended, that which he venerated, that which he wanted to believe, all attached him to the Middle Ages. But through the sensation and the disquietude and the new faith that rose in him despite himself, he was already defining the new century in its most grievous conflict. On the old wall of Santa Maria del Carmine he had already painted Man and Woman driven forth by the angel from Eden; but he took their hands to guide them, beyond their misfortune, to the Paradise within their reach. He gave birth to the

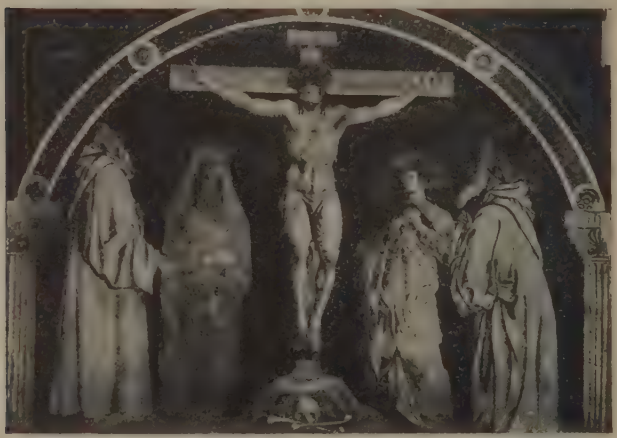
Renaissance, and it was because he lived that it sought, by its earnest study of form, to renew the lost rhythms of life.

He invented painting. It was in the dark chapel decorated by Masaccio that Raphael, da Vinci, Signorelli, and Michael Angelo came to seek their initiation.

Fra Angelico. Martyrdom of Saints Cosimo and Damian, detail. (*Louvre.*)

As we are to-day, so they were seized by those crowds that are reborn in the shadows, emerging slowly but irresistibly from their uniform atmosphere, like great larvæ of the renewed spirit and heart of men coming forth from the confused energy of primitive matter. Masaccio, at the age of twenty-five, knew what the greatest discovered only at the approach of old age—

that painting is the passage, the modeling sought for, the shadow that turns around the forms, enveloping them with silence, uniting them with the forms that are near them and behind them, and sculpturing the picture into its receding planes, as a sculptor hollows out the marble to its depths. He had discovered that what nature reveals to us is the continuity of its



ANDREA DEL CASTAGNO. The Crucifixion. (*Uffizi.*)

aspects. Not more than five or six men, if as many after him, have possessed completely that sense which has given them the power to imprint the unity and the movement of life on the world issuing from their hearts. Florence understood him well, but it was not able to follow him, and even da Vinci failed at the task.

This conquest of unity by an intelligence marked the end of the Middle Ages. In France, it had achieved its unity of instinct socially, each brain and each hand bringing a stone to the edifice without knowing how

and why the edifice should be living. In Italy, Giotto had realized in himself the moral unity of his race, but the world was not mature enough to allow him at the same time to take possession of the plastic language wherein the shaded surfaces reach a vanishing point in depth and whereby the individual is defined in his baffling complexity. When Masaccio, in his "Baptism," saw those great bare forms emerging from the crowd in which dramatic figures detach from the russet shadow like denser masses in a fiery mist, he must have felt descending upon his mind that sadness of the evenings to which the presentiment of the expected daylight gives the added anguish of hope. A sublime soul! It was not necessary for him to express the imperishable tragedy of man exiled from happiness for having willed to be man, of man reviled by God and cooling the burn of his remorse in the water of absolution: it was within him that the imperishable tragedy dwelt. When he indicated to the world that the living form which it commissioned him to study would offer it a refuge, he closed its path to new symbols until it should have learned to know nature again; he threw it back upon analysis—that is to say, upon sadness.

III

The whole great century of Florence, which no longer believed, suffered because it did not know whether the faith it had abandoned was still vouchsafed to it or whether it must seek the elements of another faith in the knowledge of the old world and of living nature toward which its instinct drew it. Hungering and thirsting for knowledge, it saw great flashes of joy against a background of despair. It was violent, but full of pity; criminal, but ascetic; anarchic, but creative.

It sought in vain, between its new sense of life and the vacillating reason which the death of the mediæval spirit had liberated in it, a harmony only half conceived among certain men, but which was to perfect itself later, outside of itself, and away from the places

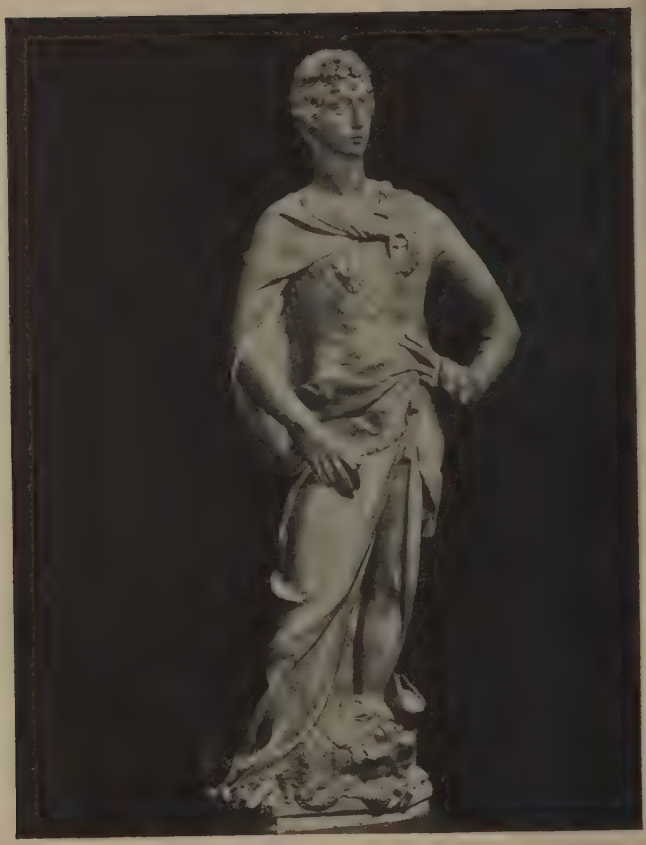
DONATELLO. Bas-relief of the Tribuna, detail. (*Museum of Santa Maria del Fiore, Florence.*)

that had seen the struggle between its memories and its presentiments.

And this was not all. When tragedy broke forth in the depth of the soul, its echoes were heard in the answering voices of sensibility and action. Why should one not taste life to its full when life is so quickly spent, when poison and the knife lie in wait for it at every turn, when meditation is in danger at every moment of being cut short by the ax and the sword of the executioner, when all may well ask themselves in the morning

whether they will be there in the evening. The whole history of the birth and the death of the Italian republics explains the terrible works in which Florence evoked them. Man is always in a state of defense; each individual stands alone, facing the other. The time owes its ardor, its curiosity, its pitiless energy to each one of the dramatic moments in which every mind was part of the living succession. It was in this fire, in which Italy consumed herself, that she tempered the modern soul. Everything that we know emanates from this as straight as the sunbeam that brings us warmth. We have maintained ourselves by this fire for a long time; the lesson is immortal. There is nothing great but has its source in sorrow and strife.

The whole drama is so real in the work of Donatello that one would think he had no precursor and no successor in Florence. When one has meditated before his tense figures, one forgets that the wise goldsmith Ghiberti had already chiseled the doors of the Baptistery into elegant groups wherein the overdeveloped sentiment of form and of decorative life seems to open a beautiful book of images above the bloody pavements to captivate the eye of the hard children who pass by, and to turn them from their path. But close at hand, Donatello is working. The warfare of the streets rumbles under his window, its clamor pierces his flesh, and his will to be calm lifts the marble and the bronze into motionless attitudes in which the steel springs of his mind are stretched to the breaking point. The blade burns in its scabbard. The fury of the city boils in the stoic heart of this son of an agitator expelled from Florence after the riot of the Ciompi. The metal obeys him just as clay does. He twists it, stretches it, and drapes it according to the direction of the fierce



DONATELLO. David. (*Museo Nazionale, Florence.*)

impulses of his logical mind, impulses which he still manages to keep within the inflexible lines of a harmony as sure and as sharp as the edge of his chisel. The more one feels his dignity and simplicity, the more his firm spirit seems bent upon forgetting the hatreds and temptations of life, and the more the storm of life, working from within outward, carves his implacable figures. They do not make a gesture, they do not move, but the inner being, revealed by the stiff legs, the enervated hands, and the faces molded by passion, bursts forth with immeasurable energy. The wrecked figures of the prophets whose brows hang over the city, the half-naked old men whose skulls and arms are withered and hard as the ground of the desert, are not the only ones who bear the weight of his anger. Those violent women, saber in hand, whose feet are tense in the blood they have spilled, are convulsed with his passion. He contracts the faces of men—warriors, thinkers, merchants—whose savage appetites have tightened their muscles, twisted their mouths, deepened their eye sockets, broadened their jaws, and forced the planes of the bones to sustain the pressure of their soul, as the crust of the earth yields to the fire at its center. He stifles his young men in their steel armor—they are rigid, thin, and of "a terrible pride";[1] he leans heavily upon those children whose faces wear their fixed expression of laughter, or who wave garlands of flowers as they dance their round. From the cradle tossed about on the roads of exile to the tomb hollowed out by the lance, everywhere the conflict of the new feelings and the ancient certitudes attains its most tragic moment. We see the trace of it in those great equestrian statues in which military force itself weighs

[1] Vasari.

down and resounds on the pavement, in those fierce visages which he hollowed out to the very heart, in all those bodies of flame and of nerves and in the clearly seen bone structures and the convulsive masks. The sculptor knows too much or not enough.

DONATELLO. Tabernacle of the Annunciation, detail. (*Santa Croce, Florence.*)

It is in this respect, far more than through the subtleties of the craft or the formulas of the studio, that all his pupils resemble Donatello. A harp of iron seems to be playing of itself somewhere in space, and all listen to it with their eyes closed and their fists clenched, so that they may convey to the bronze or the marble the throb of the rhythms by which it makes their pulses beat. The whole of the Donatellian cycle is wrung with anguish. That taut energy and that hard style do not come from the master: they were there before his work was begun, they surround him and survive him like the devouring city in which the frenzy of life burns through the generations. This is surely the work of Florence. Lucca is not far away, and yet its sculptor,

Matteo Civitali—who certainly knew the work of Donatello, since he was the contemporary of his youngest pupils—recalls the unknown Roman, who sculptured the "Great Vestal," by his plenitude, his calm, his robust and settled accent. Nowhere else had such a dramatic conception of maternity been seen: these clutching hands, this furious tenderness of the mothers, the savagery, the brutality, and the violence of the children. One sees clearly that an idea is arising, with the wild love of the world as the fruit of its brain. All—the della Robbias, Desiderio da Settignano, Mino da Fiesole, Michelozzo, Antonio Rosselino, and Benedetto da Majano—are consumed by the desire to express more than they are able and uncompromisingly to affirm moral realities which are not yet quite matured in them. With Desiderio—a living fire—the children themselves suffer, are grave, interrogate life, and ask themselves why they were born. With the gentle Mino da Fiesole, their very laugh is forced. When Luca della Robbia makes them dance, sing, or play music, they dance, sing, or play with a kind of sadness. The rhythmic beating of their feet and their hands seems to have a nervous jerkiness. Andrea della Robbia nails them up over the door of a hospital, with their little arms stretched stiffly and their little fists clasped, calling for the protection of the passer-by. And both artists find that bronze and marble do not suffice to translate their unbridled idealism. And so we get raw greens, loud blues and reds, and varnished terra-cottas of atrocious and seductive taste. . . . A people of diseased thinkers, of madmen and martyrs.

The unity of life, as one of the strong beliefs of the Middle Ages, had weakened. It had not yet penetrated the hopes of the new times. The path which Masaccio

had traced was arduous and dangerous. Italy hesitates to love form for itself, not knowing whether in it she would again find the spirit, although Francis of Assisi, a century before, had told her with so much eloquence that she would. Whither should she turn to appease her fever? Religions and philosophies are a pretext for expending our energy. Life asks only a compass in which to expand at its ease. Where shall it be found? The condition here was somewhat similar to that which arose twelve or fifteen hundred years earlier, at the moment when the pagan world and the Christian world met in conflict at Alexandria. Only the evolution took the opposite course. Donatello, because he felt the analysis gnawing him and kept midway between the lost equilibrium and the equilibrium foreseen, lived over again the ardent, fanatical, and disillusioned humanity of that time. In painted statues he described the frightful ascetics who left the cities, hiding their dishonored bodies under their matted hair, and seeming to live only in their eyes, that flamed with fever. A pure symbol and, without doubt, unconscious. Yet in these images he expressed the deeper aspect of the Florentine soul more closely even than Verrochio, who set up his harsh *condottiere* of iron on a high pedestal, or modeled with nerveless fingers his lean David, the boy who conquers through the strength of his soul—and who is sad at having conquered.

It is in the great violent work of Donatello that the sharp intellectualism of Florentine art is affirmed for the first time. By means of the mind he will try to adapt men to the reasoning world that was taking the ascendant. His is to be the tragic destiny of dying before his work is concluded, but by his death he will

DONATELLO. Statue of Gattamelata, detail. (*Padua.*)

pave the way for a victorious conclusion. How did it come about that he did not reach his goal sooner amid the intense life that presented itself to his sight? One must seek the answer in the civic upheaval that incessantly broke and dispersed the movement which he created; one must see it in the debilitating influence of the upper classes who were too rapidly and too artificially cultivated; and again it derives from the meticulous character of the work in which his art originated, the trades of the goldsmith and the carver, and beyond this in the special aspects of the locality that saw his birth and youth.

DONATELLO. St. Sebastian, bronze plaquette.
(*Musée Jacquemart-André.*)

IV

When one has crossed the Apennines to descend from the planes of the Po into Tuscany, the impression of Bolognese grandiloquence and of Venetian sensuality is suddenly effaced like an interrupted dream. One enters those narrow rings of breasted hills, striped by the horizontal lines of the houses and terraces that seem to have been drawn with the point of a steel blade, while

vertical lines are drawn by the clear-cut trunks of the cypresses and the pines that dominate the rows of white arcades. Against the pallor of the olive trees the cypresses and pines cut an almost black silhouette. The foliage of the oaks has a metallic look; the laurels have leaves of iron; and, against the sky, the cypresses take on the contours of spears. The whole has a stiff and aggressive grace which the sharp north winds from the mountains, playing on the nerves of the inhabitants, make crisper still.

Where the plain is open, the sun colors the mist and the dust that envelops the distance. Facing the valley, the hills rise to the gates of the city and close the horizon. When one climbs the highest terraces, the further reaches of the landscape are sometimes clearer than the first ridge beneath which the sun has already sunk. Whether one considers the lines of Cronaca's palaces or Brunelleschi's, the mauve-colored houses with the green shutters, the river as blue as a knife or the cold violet of the heights against the green mother-of-pearl of the sky, there is nothing so transparent as the daylight of that country, there is nothing so hard as its evening. One sees clear-cut lines, lights, and shadows outlined with a fine thin edge and none of those curves that gently lead the eye from one form to another. The harmonies are limpid and somber, and diamonds appear to be interposed in great numbers between the eye and the landscape. Plastic generalizations do not fall within one's vision, and however keen and subtle the artist may be, he is in danger of limiting himself to expressive or psychological line at the expense of that broad co-ordinated ensemble which, in other countries, will assure to the work of art the movement, the materiality, and the inner force of life.

A passionate draftsman, living—so to speak—in that expressive line which he drove like a weapon into the interstices of the muscles to carve them out under the skin, master of a dry orchestration in his severe fresco wherein the planes are merged no more than those he sees around him, using the hard colors which his graded hills so clearly outlined against the sky, the Florentine never acquired the sense of volume and of the passage in depth that gives birth to the sculptor-peoples and leads the painters, little by little, to express form and space as in a globe. From Masaccio, who had passed his childhood in a part of Tuscany where the setting sun sculptures the mountains with planes of shadow, he inherited only the dramatic sentiment of a world which had reached life midway between dying ideas and ideas not yet fully matured.

It was that passion for line which prevented him from extricating himself completely, even when da Vinci arrived, from a sort of intellectual primitivism, which for a moment he nearly escaped with Gozzoli, and more especially with Ghirlandajo, but into which he was thrown back by the influence of the Platonists and by the morbid genius of Sandro Botticelli. To oppose his need for demonstrating and for abstracting, he would have had to abandon himself to the inclination of his instinct, to have built upon the fiery realism which was the basis of his nature in order naturally to work out the plastic idealism that is foretold in the work of Masaccio. But he was devoured by such a passion for knowing, for discovering and comprehending, that his mind outstripped his senses, and he wore himself out in too often seeking the secret of life outside of the madly intense feeling that he had for it.

The real life of Florence, dramatic and decorative,

PAOLO UCCELLO. The Profanation of the Host, detail.
(*Ducal Palace, Urbino.*)

might have been an inexhaustible source of emotion for the artists if they had turned directly toward that life. The dissociation was barely noticeable in the popular sentiment, whose need for passion was fed by brawls and spectacles. The ideas of the theorists did not touch all the painters, even if all, down to the rudest and simplest, received the burning imprint of the city and of its anguish. The majority of them began by hard work in the goldsmiths' shops of the Ponte Vecchio and in the workrooms of the manufacturers of altar pictures, where gold dust was always flying in the air. They carried their workmen's roughness with them into the circle of the Platonists—and it was their salvation. There was nothing of the littérateur about the murderer Andrea del Castagno, a man with a mind as sharp as an ax, who painted his Christ upon the walls as a butcher hangs a piece of meat, who, in the portraits of the soldiers and the poets of Florence, painted forms as tense as his heart, as genuine as his pride, as gigantic as his energy; his cuirasses, his swords, and his black laurels offer us a world of iron, and an implacable hymn of asceticism, vengeance, and love. There was nothing of the pedant about Paolo Uccello, who, with his pure intensity, painted the great red pictures of the tournaments, where companies of knights, their pennants bristling amid the lances, hurled themselves together with a clang of armor and the clash of cavalry. With all the disciplined tumult, the heavy and regular surge of the squadrons, the parallelism of the lances, the great peace of the dark forests in which a hunt is shown, the galloping, the neighing, and the clamor, whether of war or of the chase, the image was a theorem notwithstanding, through its massive rhythm and its dark, dull harmony. One of the workmen of art, and a very

learned one, he spent his days and nights in resolving problems of perspective, and a geometrical order still characterized his pictures even when he bowed his head to observe childhood (never loved more fervently than in Florence) and which he gravely considered. The tragedy of sentiment would not yield to expression

Paolo Uccello. The Profanation of the Host, detail of the fresco. (*Ducal Palace, Urbino.*)

otherwise than by the rigorous play of the lines that dominate the form in movement. He paints haunting pictures, apparitions of living shadows against backgrounds that are almost abstract, where the severity of the straight lines—a mechanism that sends the drama back into space or spreads it out—intensifies its nervous force and its pathetic beauty. The powerful dynamics of Uccello will animate the noble age of Italy, through Piero della Francesca and Signorelli first of all, and will continue until the end of Michael Angelo's career.

The universal character of the artist of Florence prevented him, doubtless, from expanding fully. If he had followed his instinct to the end, he would probably have come sooner upon the creative emotion divested of all preoccupation as to the technique to be employed, because the emotion would have absorbed, digested, assimilated that technique by giving it a function in the intelligence and the heart. But because of this pitiless research, the following century gained a force and a grandeur that were to influence all of Europe. The rigorous discipline that the Florentine mind imposed upon itself postponed a realization which in turn it knew it could not hope to achieve by itself. And this discipline excited the curiosity, revealed innumerable energies, and illuminated as to their own value minds which did not know, in the chaotic state of knowledge, where the instrument of liberation was to be found. Leon Battista Alberti was at once architect, painter, geometer, engineer, dramatist, poet, Latinist, and theologian. Brunelleschi, determining the all-powerful action of his immediate disciples, Donatello, Masaccio, and Uccello, really created linear perspective, which permitted his successors to introduce among the geometrical planes the illusion of life unfurling in depth. Cennino Cennini, L. B. Alberti, Ghiberti, Paolo Uccello, Piero della Francesca, Leonardo da Vinci, Cellini, and Vasari had written, were writing, or were to write didactic treatises on architecture, perspective, sculpture, painting, the goldsmith's art, or even the exact or natural sciences, geometry, hydraulics, anatomy, and geology. The artists opened cadavers to become acquainted with the mechanism of matter in movement. Before permitting itself, with Raphael, with Titian, with Michael Angelo, to demand of form its

Paolo Uccello. The Profanation of the Host, detail.
(*Ducal Palace, Urbino.*)

dynamism, to cause it to move in every direction by reason of the necessity for expression, and ever in obedience to its law of continuity, the Italian intelligence had to fix the architectural form, had to try to inscribe its images in the triangle and the circle, and to establish its harmony with receding space and the succession of the planes. It was from the triple effort of the geometers, Uccello, Piero della Francesca, Mantegna, and da Vinci; of the literary painters, Filippo Lippi, Pollaiuolo, and Botticelli; and of the prophets, della Quercia, Masaccio, and Donatello, that Italian art came forth.

The picturesque element, which served only as a pretext, came from Venice and from the nomadic painters, who followed the roads on foot or on horseback, were present at the battles that occurred each day in every mountain pass where the *condottieri* led their bands, stopped in the cities to decorate a baptistery, and started off again to seek their bread. Those were the best ones. Their names were Giotto, Taddeo Gaddi, Angelico, Benozzo Gozzoli, Paolo Uccello, Filippo Lippi, Gentile da Fabriano, Piero della Francesca, Luca Signorelli, and Bernardino Pinturrichio. They went from Florence to Pisa, from Pisa to Siena, from Siena to San Gimignano, from San Gimignano to Urbino, from Urbino to Arezzo, from Arezzo to San Sepolcro, from San Sepolcro to Perugia, to Assisi, to Orvieto, to Spoleto, and from Spoleto to Rome. They were workmen; they worked together, transmitting their secrets from one to another; each one painted his wall, another taking up the work of him who was called by death; the palaces, the temples, the municipal buildings, the monasteries, and the cemeteries were covered with paintings; the very façades were decorated; a wonderful hope made all the cities blossom.

FILIPPO LIPPI. The Dance of Salome, detail of the fresco.
(*Cathedral of Prato.*)

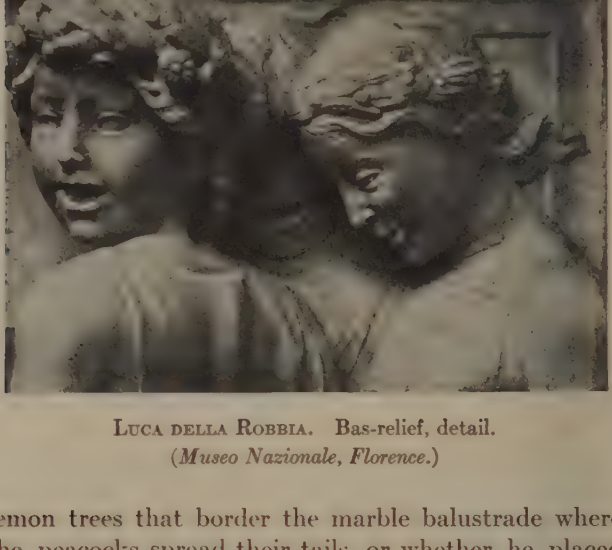
In Lombardy, in Venetia, and especially in Tuscany and Umbria, there are frescoes everywhere; tiny villages have a church or a chapel with paintings; the workers left the studio where they got their training to stay a few months and then remained until their death at the place whither they had gone. At other times, when they got better pay by going to some other place, they did not finish their work. As they believed in themselves, as they had an immense strength, they were not afraid to leave a little of their lives at every stone on the road; the desire for future work was their aim. They were almost all jealous of one another, but it was not because of the money. Each one believed that he had within him the most beautiful work of all, and from effort to effort rose to conquer. What an opening on life, in those times when life was always a menace, they found in this comradeship of the trade, these rivalries of the intelligence, and also in these adventures of the road unknown to the inhabitants of cities and to painters with fixed positions! Every day they had to yield to or resist the lure of the landscape through which they were passing, the broils which they witnessed, the princely trains they would meet at the crossroads, and the beautiful creatures in whom a look, a laugh, a gesture of the two arms, or a twist of the hips contained more of eternity than all the systems of aesthetics that clash in the minds of the intellectuals.

Benozzo Gozzoli was able to escape the influence of the writers and the patrons only because he was accustomed to lead that life. When he worked at Pisa or at San Gimignano, he was almost as far from Florence as his master, Angelico, isolated behind the four walls of a cloister, where he strewed with flowers the azure paths of the dream through which the divine white bride was

to pass. His mind flowered like a meadow. He gave peacock wings to the angels mounted on his red clouds or those that gather blood-red roses in his black gardens; and it was not to express their celestial nature, but to render them more beautiful. He admired. He stretched out shining cavalcades across the Florentine countryside, and in it he placed biblical stories, which told how the vintage was made, how war, and what were the feasts and the working days in the time of Cosimo or Lorenzo de' Medici. In his delight he roamed the plains covered with vineyards and bathed by winding rivers that disappear amid the sharp hills; he followed the ribbon of the roads that are bordered by red houses under clusters of overhanging pines and yew trees; the country is somber and glows like a mirror of green bronze, through which trails the purple of the skies. And when he flooded the fresco with shining colors in which the gold, the green, and the black punctuated the flow of the carmine, it was because he held in his hand an open pomegranate and because, in the morning, to

LUCA DELLA ROBBIA. The Singers, bas-relief. (*Museum of Santa Maria del Fiore, Florence.*)

climb to a group of cypresses from which one saw afar off the blue line of the mountains, he had crossed one of those Tuscan fields of scarlet clover amid which the poppies seem pale. Whether he was under the shade of the trellises where the big, densely clustering grapes overflowed the cane baskets, or whether on the terraces of the villas, he followed the thin shadow of the



LUCA DELLA ROBBIA. Bas-relief, detail.
(*Museo Nazionale, Florence.*)

lemon trees that border the marble balustrade where the peacocks spread their tails, or whether he placed bread and wine and fruit on a white tablecloth, the world never seemed to him completely to respond to the symphonies whose splendor filled his enchanted eyes. He was a rich spirit, indeed, tenderly ironical in his wonder at legends and at the sight of labor—but he was, first of all, a painter. Not only was he the

colorist of Florence, but perhaps also the first, among all the modern painters of Europe, to venture upon a radical transposition of the colors of nature. The lyrical note in painting results when a logical universe is created from imaginary elements whose intricate relationships lead the eye back to the intuitive laws that have dictated our idea of harmony.

Had Gozzoli been acquainted with Persian illuminations, one might believe that he had enlarged them to the dimensions of the walls, adding to them a sense of distance and saturating them with the essences of the growing fields that throw upon the earth those same greenish shadows which the sun leaves as it sinks. Whereas Giotto, in his rapid discovery of the great school of decorative painting, inclosed the essential spaces in a few linear rhythms so simple that they became part of the scheme of the architecture; Tuscan art, from the time of Fra Angelico, returned to the painting of the missal, a thing related to enameled color, to the character of the landscape, and to the characteristic Tuscan need for analysis. Everything that is meticulous and petty in the practice of this craft disappears in the radiance that shone from the heart and the eyes of an Angelico or a Gozzoli. But among those men whom Florence held in her power, men who could not flee her or master her; the double current of miniature painting and of literature misled their native passion. Aureoled angels with the plumage of birds of the Orient bearing long-stemmed lilies are shown against backgrounds strewn with flowers; they walk with jerky, nervous, and bizarre steps toward the complicated Paradises of the Florentine æsthetes. The fashionable painters cut short their investigation and resort to primitive formulas imperfectly assimilated,

Agostino di Duccio. Pilasters of the door, detail. (*Church of Sts. Andrea and Bernardino, Perugia.*)

through which they may more quickly follow the ideas of the writers.

V

This need affected even those who entered most vehemently into the passionate life of Florence. When one knows the story of Filippo Lippi, his work is astonishing, for it seems built up from those elements in life that we may accept unquestioningly. He was one of those surprising and magnificently impulsive men whom their time pardoned for everything because, in considering their life, it recognized its own instinct. They knew no law except their own desire. A hundred years later, Benvenuto, in a dozen of instances, will not hesitate at murder. Herein is the glory and the danger of the

Italian soul. It goes its full length at a bound. One might say that it has no resting place between crime and heroism. The anarchy of sentiment that weighed so heavily on a Masaccio and a Donatello drove Filippo Lippi to devour life in every direction—he who remained a monk after having seduced the nuns. For him love was a kind of fury. Between two fiery adventures he worked in a state of exaltation; the violent modeling and the red accents of his painting caused the sacred story to burst forth from out the darkness of the chapels and to be inducted into Florentine society, tormented and quivering with the drama that was decomposing it. Around the festivals and the banquets in the palaces, whose low-ceilinged halls are paved with squares of white and black, there glide strange blond women who prolong the age of mysticism to the midst of the magnificent orgy wherein the senses and thought were renewed together. Filippo Lippi marks perhaps the most anxious moment in the life of Florence. Although the painters still search the Scriptures for almost every pretext for manifesting their passion, Humanism, whose work is progressing, has penetrated them. The conflict shifts to another field. It is no longer between their ancient beliefs and the rise of that instinct which urges them on to scrutinize the forms so as to extract the spirit. It is between this living instinct itself and the premature influence of philosophic and literary erudition which pretends to have recovered from the thought of antiquity the food for the new needs that Italy is discovering in herself. With Filippo Lippi, Florentine line becomes enervated, exaggerates its curves, and begins to distort bearing and gesture, the inclination of the head and the twist of the neck on the shoulders, the folds of garments, and

BENOZZO GOZZOLI. The Drunkenness of Noah, detail.
(*Campo Santo, Pisa.*)

even the form of flowers. All his pupils and even the sculptors, Agostino di Duccio among others, will follow him in this respect. The Platonist spirit, which the élite claims to follow, comes too soon. The Greek soul, with Plato, sustained its generalizations on three hundred years of life that had been lived, felt, and loved for itself, that had developed harmoniously, continuously, in a single direction and without turning back—to reach the climax of its natural ascent in the living idealism of the century of Pericles. Florence bites into a fruit that is too green and that sets her teeth on edge.

And yet it was better for Florence and for Italy to explore the literary ground presented by the Platonists, who were prepared to retrace their steps, than to efface themselves before the works of the past that were offered to them as models. The life of the senses and the passions was, it is true, too strong in them for them to submit to this effacement. In reality there is nothing in Florentine form that recalls the form of the antique, and there is no more relationship between Florentine art and that of the sculptors of Athens or of imperial Italy than there was between the religion and the social rhythm of the Florence of the fifteenth century and Greco-Latin paganism. In the antique the form is as calm and full as Florentine form is sharp and dry and strained. Even when it tries to resemble the art of the dead races, perhaps especially at that moment, Tuscan art remains Tuscan. Whatever the influence of Petrarch and of Humanism—a beneficent influence, since it aroused curiosity, the restlessness of the artists, and a need for analysis which was essential in those times—Italian painting owed nothing to ancient art save the desire to find itself. We must not forget that Italy was still Italy, that although twelve centuries had

Benozzo Gozzoli. Paradise, fresco.
(*Palazzo Riccardi, Florence.*)

implanted in men a more feverish sensibility, neither its landscapes, nor the products of its soil, nor its climate, had changed, and that it was the genius of their senses which the Italians were obeying when they asked of the ancient world the testimony and the support of a form of intelligence which they felt to be related to their own. Before Petrarch, Dante knew Vergil, for he had asked Vergil to accompany him to the Inferno, and he was on the point of writing his poem in Latin. But life bore him away.

In Italy life conquered everywhere. Italy wrote her poem in a language that responded to her desire. If, after a hundred years of torture, she recovered a form which on its surface recalled the ancient form, it was because the ancient form had been, as the painting of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was itself, a necessary expression of the Greco-Latin peoples.

For a moment even, in the full tide of Humanism, when Lorenzo de' Medici was organizing and singing his "Triumphs," when the pagan processions were defiling before the Loggia dei Lanzi amid clamors and broils, and when Poliziano was writing his "Stanzas," the Florentine soul seemed to be on the point of arresting in real life, transfigured by a great painter, the evolution that was carrying the Italian genius toward the plastic idealism realized by the artists in the following century. While Botticelli was accentuating what there was of artificiality in the work of Filippo Lippi to the most extreme literary development, Ghirlandajo was singling out from it that part which was most direct and most healthy. We have no image of Florentine life more faithful than that which he left us. And despite his violent drawing, his somewhat confused but powerful orchestrations, despite the accent of his portraits, his

nervous bodies, and the bony legs of the thin figures in which concentrated passion produces a grave, sad, rather haggard character, one cannot say as much for Filippo Lippi. All his life he hesitated and was never able to choose between what he had learned through the work of his father and the opposing influences of Ghirlandajo and of Botticelli. As for the rude Verrochio, the only one of the great contemporaries of these three painters who, like them, fell under the dominating influence of Donatello and of Filippo Lippi, the problems of perspective and anatomical dissection occupied almost his entire time. When he worked at sculpture, he attached more importance to the manner of working the material and of casting the bronze of his statues than he did to the statues themselves, their pride, their passion, their overwhelming brutality. When he worked at painting, he set himself to invent a style as hard as metal, upon coming into contact with the undulating forms of the murmuring landscapes.

Ghirlandajo was the only one to love painting for itself. He alone had that joy of painting which made the glory of Venice and of the Flemings. He regretted that he had not "the circuit of the walls of Florence to cover with painting."[1] With Gozzoli—who had arrived thirty years earlier, though he departed a little later—among all the Florentines, he alone could see the landscapes receding among the hills; he alone knew how to give distance to the great halls with their square-flagged pavements, to the terraces, and to the skies against which one sees the clear-cut profile of the campaniles and the towers. If, unlike Masaccio, he does not seem to have understood the essential rôle of the lights and the shadows, he was the only one who

[1] Vasari.

tried to unite the former with the latter through atmosphere, through the balancing of groups, through exact values and the planes that give an appearance of the real to the most daring transpositions of plastic art.

Mino da Fiesole. Tomb of Tornabuoni, detail.
(*S. Maria sopra Minerva, Rome.*)

Only he, after Masaccio and until da Vinci—and more than da Vinci perhaps—only he tried to emerge from that intellectual primitivism which constituted the originality and the weakness of Florence. He gained and lost thereby. Of the Italians of his period, he is the one who, by his language, is the nearest to the

great periods. He is the one, perhaps, who is furthest from them in lyricism and in royalty.

He felt no remorse about transporting Christian mythology into the everyday life of the rich citizens of his country. Sober during a time when the painters were accumulating their figures without order, harmonizing their tones confusedly, and overloading their compositions with flowers and rich stuffs, he yet knew how to paint the beautiful processions as they passed, how to orchestrate with magnificence their oranges and dull reds, and the lilacs and the greens, and to set, in his white spaces, furniture, the ledge of open windows, baskets of fruits, bouquets, sonorous glasses, and peacocks spreading into a fan the precious gems of their tails. He understood the young women of Florence whom Filippo Lippi had loved too furiously for him to look upon them in a wholesome way. They walk in their silver-embroidered dresses, their beautiful hands clasped at the waist. They turn toward him their long fine faces, a little sickly, without beauty, but with a

Antonio Pollaiuolo. Bust.
(*Museo Nazionale, Florence.*)

charm so unforeseen, and so grave, with their sad mouth and eyes, the too-slender neck under the weight of the blond tresses which give them the appearance of a flower too heavy for its stem and withering before it has reached full bloom. They chat among themselves, offer their breasts or arms to new-born children, carry linen or baskets, or superintend the affairs of an elegant household. Sometimes they go out upon terraces from which one can see a sober, airy, and precise landscape running back to the horizon, a Tuscan landscape, encumbered with hills, sown with pine trees and tilled fields under a silver sky through which sail the great birds.

There is perhaps no other "intimist" in this passionate Italy whose especial glory is that of having translated the human drama, with the universal drama, into generalizations which were transposed into painting. Like all the Italians, to be sure, Ghirlandajo is a decorator. His style is too tense for him to tell the story of evening peace and the meals in the home. He is restless; drama is afoot. The man who was most in love with silence and the hearth does not escape the genius of his race. From a people that lives in the street or that leans out of the windows when it hears the noise of broils, of songs, of talk, and festivals, that frequently beholds the spectacle of acts of violence or of love, from an expressive and living crowd whose mimicry is another language, that understands everything and causes everything to be understood instantaneously, that is amused and roused to passion simultaneously or successively by the speeches of the orators and the tradesmen of the streets, from such one must not ask that the sources of its emotion and its means of activity be sought in the discreet calm of family life.

Passion reveals truth and heroism along paths that are sometimes more painful to follow, but which are as sure as those of meditation.

Be that as it may, Ghirlandajo carried the nervous line of Filippo Lippi back into Florentine life, and almost reached the point of incorporating it with the volumes in his paintings and with space. It is an astonishing effort for that moment, when Botticelli, on the contrary, was trying to extricate that line from living matter so as to give a factitious animation to the literary abstractions of Florentine intellectualism. We know that Ghirlandajo had nine children, of whom several were painters and his pupils, that he worked ceaselessly; and Vasari tells us that he possessed "an invincible courage." When one compares this life with the perpetual restlessness, the painful incoherence, and the agitation of Botticelli's life, which was lived "each day for itself,"[1] one understands the contrast better.

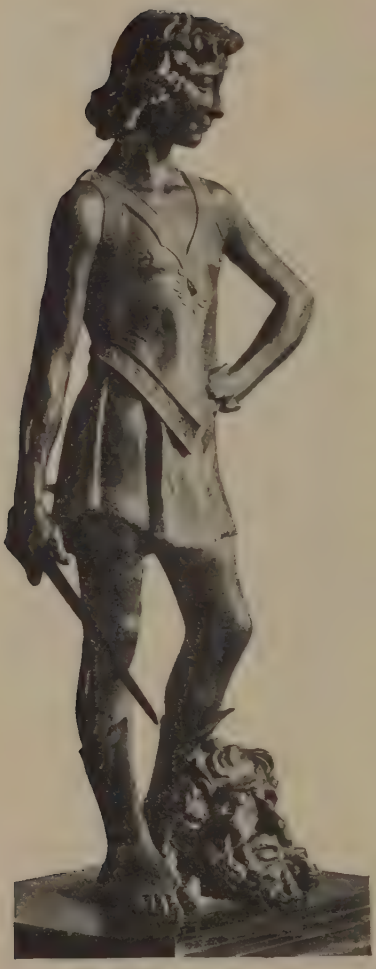
MATTEO CIVITALI. The Madonna and Child. (*Santa Trinità, Lucca.*)

[1] Vasari.

On the one hand, a great workman, a certain bourgeois heaviness, not much lyricism, but a great deal of strength and of knowledge; on the other hand, "a brain fashioned in the alembic of an alchemist,"[1] a wild desire, continually shattered by life, to surpass and to forget life. With Botticelli the quivering line of Donatello and of Lippi follows only the complicated, abstract, and—in reality—thoroughly obscure direction of a sensibility that feeds on rotting food. It intensifies its curves and its angles; with each new work it exaggerates the twist of limbs and of heads and seems to seek in the bare bodies of the young men and young women of Florence the marks of a decline, that is smiting the energy of the city. Antonio Pollaiuolo, at about the same hour, with the same intellectual perversity and the same nervous acuteness, but with less imagination, was making strange researches into color, mingling precious and rare tones to give an effect like that of the mottling of stagnant waters. Italian passion was whirling out of its orbit. Humanism, gathering from the work of Plato the almost withered flower of the soul of antiquity, had destroyed its perfume. The Florentine intellectual, because he had desired to begin at the place where Greece left off, found himself obliged to transport himself to an artificial sphere from which the vibrant and living element furnished by our inexhaustible world was banished. The natural symbolism of the poets of the Middle Ages lived again as a hothouse plant, unknown and miserable, and doomed to die at its first contact with the burning atmosphere from out-of-doors.

There is not an artist who expresses this intellectual tragedy with more distress than does Sandro Botticelli, though he does not know it himself; his was a volup-

[1] Vasari.



VERROCCHIO. David, bronze. (*Museo Nazionale, Florence.*)

tuous imagination, but an unhealthy one also, and it tortured itself until the end because it did not find itself in accord with the living universe, which it desired without knowing how to do so. He discovered the mystery of the woods and the meadows, the fecundity of the sea, and the wildness of the wind. His desire for naked beauty was so feverish that even before looking at it, he twisted and burned it in the flames of his desire. He loved flowers so much that he caused them to rain from the sky when he found none on the earth. But they exhaled the mortuary odor of dead flowers. It was in vain that he wove them into crowns and garlands, that he loaded roses

and pinks, hyacinths, and bluebells upon the black trees, upon the lawns, the breezes, the gauzy dresses, and the flying hair of the slender androgynes by means of which he attempted to bring back to his canvases the springtime of the past; the forsaken Venuses, all the goddesses of forests and springs in

GHIRLANDAJO. The Visitation, fresco. (*Santa Maria Novella, Florence.*)

whom he no longer believed, the fruits, the flowers, and the accumulation of nude forms only accentuated his impotence to restore to life its blending force. An artificial work, undecided, painful, and abortive, the saddest in the history of painting.

And yet one of the most noble. The intense restlessness that one feels in it does no more than accentuate the aspiration toward an intellectual harmony which a less literary and more plastic culture would have permitted him to achieve. If the man's mind is poisoned by it, his instinct is ever pure and grave, and

amid this culture the artist seems crucified by his continued vain effort to wrest his ever-living faith from the complications ever ready to arise in his ill-balanced intelligence. The walk and the dance, the passing processions, the urge toward love and our love of childhood, all that transforms the fairest impulses of the heart into gesture, all of that preserves, nevertheless, a spiritual majesty in his work, which the strangest movement and the most bizarre composition are not sufficient to mask. Botticelli is the victim of the æsthetes of his time, and of our time, too. The former perverted him. The latter misunderstood him. His destiny remains tragic. His posthumous glory wills it so, as did his art itself and his life and his death.

This great imaginative spirit, who lacked nothing of the great man save simple humanity, ended his life, sick and corrupted, in religious orders. This is the usual fate of men whose sensibility is too acute for them to submit to the discipline of their weak intelligence. He was among the first and earliest of the Renaissance painters to mingle Aphrodites and Virgins—the pagan gods, in whom he believed only through literary dilletantism, with the Christian gods to whom he returned in a spirit of discouraged mysticism—and he suffered for doing so. Even in this he found no rest. He illustrated the *Inferno* of Dante with convulsive drawings that make one think of a dance of madmen in the nave of a cathedral. In desperation he followed Savonarola who was arousing Florence against the spirit of moral disintegration and of elegant corruption brought about by the coming of tyranny and the reign of analysis—of which his work had clearly been the manifestation. Standing beside the terrible monk he must, doubtless, have burned the

GHIRLANDAJO. Birth of St. John the Baptist, fresco, detail. (*Santa Maria Novella, Florence.*)

books, slashed the pictures, and have brought certain of his own works to be thrown into the flames. Savonarola, who insisted that the painters return to the æsthetics of Fra Angelico, surely did not dream that the work of the good friar was one of the sources of the necessary evil which he swore to extirpate. He knew well that the form is conquered by the spirit whenever

Benedetto da Majano. (*Palazzo Strozzi, Florence.*)

they conflict, but he had no idea that the spirit is conquered by the form when it demands that form express it; he knew that divine truth resides nowhere else but in the equilibrium between the form and the spirit, the equilibrium always aimed at, always approximated, always destroyed, and always hoped for when it is destroyed again. His love for Angelico was again, as ever, that idolatry through which, three centuries earlier, Francis of Assisi had delivered Italy.

VI

It was doubtless too late or too soon for Florence to reach conclusions. The Republic, distracted by civil war, rendered anæmic by tyranny, enervated by intellectualism, by murder and love, had been passing through unexpected crises from a spirited atheism to a febrile mysticism, with merely an almost exhausted energy to offer to the Italian soul. At the end of her history Florence still retained her primitive language, and that primitive language was already dull because it had been used to express too many sensations, and worn out, because it had served too many intelligences. The last of her great painters vainly fled the harsh city in his attempt to break the diamond matrix in which she imprisoned all hearts. Although he was ahead of his time, although he was, by the extent and penetration of his analysis, the first of modern minds, he remains a primitive at base, an old primitive very learned and disenchanted, something like a germ of life already savoring of the cadaver.

The Florentine line, that abstract and almost arbitrary line which da Vinci now contrives to unite with volume until, as it merges into contour, it is confused with the diminution of the light and the beginning of shadow—this line is always felt to be present, pressing like a ring of metal upon skulls, faces, shoulders, arms, and hands, forcing the form to bend under its embrace so as to describe it in depth. One feels that, unlike Masaccio, who looked on life in the mass and who sculptured it on his canvas with the force of his lights and shadows, Leonardo took a section of life, followed it in its accidents, its relations with surrounding life, and its course through space, and never lost sight of

BOTTICELLI. Spring, detail. (*Galleria Antica e Moderna, Florence.*)

the line that described the projections, the hollows, and the undulations which were born of his pursuit of that line. One feels—and this is why he remains a primitive despite his incalculable power—one feels that it is through knowledge that he succeeds in surrounding his sculptured masses with air and in sending back to a distance, in plane after plane, the blue backgrounds of shattered rocks, of mountains, of sinuous roads, and slender trees that live with an artificial life, like a theorem clinging to an emotion. Gozzoli and Ghirlandajo, intuitively, through their sense of exact values, sent their landscapes back to the horizon with more success than da Vinci did, immersed as he was in perspective and mathematics. It is in his mind that the relationships of the world live, even more so than in his senses, and much more than in his heart.

FILIPPINO LIPPI. Portrait of the Artist, detail. (*Church of the Carmine, Florence.*)

With this astounding man who founded or foresaw all the future sciences together, to whom the arts of sculpture and painting seem to be no more than human applications of the abstract ideas which he had drawn from the study of geometry, perspective, mechanics,

BOTTICELLI. The Dance, fresco, detail. (*Villa Galetti, near Florence.*)

alchemy, geology, hydraulics, anatomy, and botany, experimentation was of equal importance with the intuition that he possessed to the highest degree; his intuition was of the kind that creates life, the intuition that is inherent in every great artist, is sovereign to such a degree that it first instigates and then halts the infinite number of conscious or unconscious researches that pre-

BOTTICELLI. Sacrifice of the Leper, detail. (*Sistine Chapel.*)

pared its explosion. He is perhaps the only man in whom science and art were merged through their means of expressing thought, since they tend to unite, in their common need, to establish the continuity of the laws of nature in the domain of the mind.

Look at his drawings of machines, his anatomical drawings, his drawings of muscles and of flowers. They are the exact and minute representation of the machine, of the muscles, of the flowers. They have also that

mysterious tremor, that radiant and secret expression which one sees in his strange, charming, or hard faces that may mean so many things under the rain of the hair that curls to the bare shoulders and to the bare breasts where the artist's line, with each succeeding stroke, draws forth from beneath the skin the silent movement of the inner life. The Italian artists of the fifteenth century had done well to explore the nature of the cadaver, to study the course of the tendons, the projections of the bones, the infinite flow of the nerves, the veins, and the arteries. Even at the cost of a certain confusion, even at the cost of certain conflicts between enthusiasm which creates and observation which disillusions, it was necessary for humanity, little by little, to draw from analysis the consciousness of unity; it had to learn how to discover that the flame which glows in the depths of human eyes sleeps in the heart of all forms, that it causes the trees to tremble to the tips of their leaves, that it is in the wings of the birds, the elytra of the insects, in the living muscles and in the dead bones, that it passes from the vibrations of the atmosphere into the murmuring of the brooks and even into the life of stones. On the day when Cellini uttered his artist's admiration for the vertebræ and the bones of the pelvis, he spoke in the name of two centuries which lived to demonstrate to us that all the forms of knowledge may show us how to master and to increase the growth of our mind. "The more one knows," said Leonardo, "the more one loves."

He knew. In his eyes the form was no more than the symbol of a higher intellectual reality whose fleeting direction and infinite character were translated by the smile on a face or the gesture of a hand. It is a conception which, in order to remain plastic, needs to be

LEONARDO DA VINCI. Mona Lisa, drawing. (*Musée de Chantilly.*)

supported upon a formidable, narrow, and implacably objective knowledge of the material of which life is made. It seems as if he had understood everything. His "Bacchus" is the father of his "Saint John the Baptist." The old dogmas and the new sentiments were, with him, no longer in conflict. He accepted the world. He divined great things. In the "Leda," where the wing of the swan followed with its embrace the line like that of a lyre, which starts from the living arm, from the warm, round breast to descend to the bare feet, there is, in the grass, a broken egg from which children have just come forth and are picking flowers. He perceived the common source and the eternal circle of things. He descended to the profoundest depths of nature, with only his senses as the intermediary between the outer universe regarding which they gradually reported to him and the inner universe which controlled their agitation. And when he raised his eyes to corroborate, from the faces and attitudes of men, the results of his own meditation,

LEONARDO DA VINCI. Study.
(*Academy, Venice.*)

he observed that their faces and their attitudes were a result of the contact of their living mind with the living mind of the things that surrounded them.

That is the reason why, in his great picture of the "Last Supper," where the inner drama creates its wave of

LEONARDO DA VINCI. The Adoration of the Magi. (*Uffizi.*)

life and twists and sculptures the forms like trees in a hurricane, we find the loftiest work of active psychology in the history of painting. He had the power to penetrate under every surface, to the depths of every human skull, of living through its intimate tragedy, of infusing the tragedy into the gestures which it dictated, and of

uniting all the movements of serenity and of revolt, of swift advance and of recoil, of reserve and of abandon into a single movement of the mind. With him it is a psychological arabesque that we get, transcribed by the form.

Da Vinci could seize the same smile in the eyes and on the lips of all the beings that came forth from his mind and insnare the movement of their fingers, outstretched toward the same invisible point, as if to indicate to the future the doubt which he felt within him. His painting, which is without mystery, is the mystery of painting—one of the human mysteries. In him, all the science amassed by the century flowers into poetry, and his science was composed of all the poetry which his precursors have strewn about them. In an epoch when Platonist idealism, which he ceaselessly combated, had misled intelligence, he had the sense of real life which alone leads to the grandest abstractions. He had the gentleness of wisdom and had acquired it at a time when the life of impulse was loosed upon the world. Skeptical and disillusioned at a time when minds susceptible of discontent were rushing back to the beliefs of the old days, he attained, through his lofty reason, to the threshold of that confused sentiment in which new religions are born, when humanity has rejected all the dogmas on which its certitude reposed. And he, who claimed that there is no science save that which may be translated into mathematical symbols, is the man who translates what he knows into almost inscrutable plastic poems in which, perhaps in spite of himself, intuition guides his hand.

There is nothing in the world more vivifying and more discouraged, more ambiguous and more intelligent, more defined and more infinite than his work. It

LEONARDO DA VINCI. Saint Anne and the Virgin, drawing.
(*Burlington House, London.*)

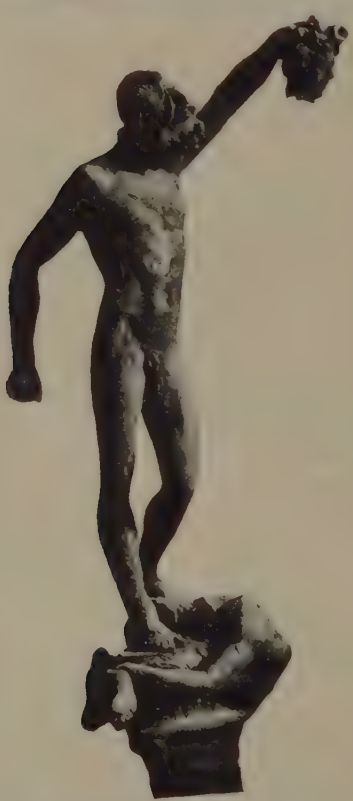
is the whole of Florence, from Masaccio to Botticelli—its fiery analysis, its hasty synthesis, its line penetrating to the heart and dissecting the brain; it is everything that she suffered, everything that she hoped to give to us; and the whole of it concentrates in this immense and secret soul which never opens to us completely. Da Vinci embodied within him the torment of Florence and he did not consent, any more than she did, to tell us everything that he had learned therefrom.

It was apart from da Vinci, apart from the Florence which he himself had abandoned and at the hour of her decline, that the Renaissance was to find its clearest expression. The historical rôle of the Italian republics, if one excepts Venice, was finished. Exhausted by their internal struggles and by the unbridled indulgence of the freedom of their passions, they had reached the end of their capacity for effort. Their individualism, having exhausted the individual, delivered them over to tyranny. They had lost the spring and the pride that took the place of social bonds among them; they had lost the idea of the dignity of existence and the sense of living righteousness. Already the prey of the *condottieri*, they appealed now to Spain, now to France, who, themselves having achieved unity, profited by it to force themselves on Italy, whose people no longer believed in the heroism of her destiny.

And yet, the confused sentiment which had guided the Renaissance demanded consummation. If it had lost its early sweep, it retained the speed that it had acquired. All it sought was favorable ground for its unfolding. At Rome, the Pontificate offered a rather precarious shelter, but the only one that remained in the storm, except Venice, where Italy mingled with the Orient to infuse a magnificent life into the men who

LEONARDO DA VINCI. Bacchus, detail. (*Louvre.*)

had grown up in the wake of her triumphal movement. Florence, where Leonardo had passed no more than his youth, obeyed until the end the singular destiny which renders her such an incomparable focus of intellectual initiation, but where the mind seems to be prohibited—perhaps because of the too-numerous excitements and problems that besiege it—from achieving its accord with the elements of feeling and sense which could bring about a definitive harmony. It was merely to light his flame that Raphael came there; Michael Angelo, who was trained there, returns only during times of crisis—once to defend the city, once to sculpture some tombs. Those who remain Florentines, Albertinelli, Piero di Cosimo, Lorenzo di Credi himself, so tender, so discreet, and so unusual, still belong in the line of the primitives



BENVENUTO CELLINI. Perseus, wax. (*Museo Nazionale, Florence.*)

FILIPPO PALADINI. The Sister of Mercy, detail. (*Hospital of Pistoia.*)

who had been intellectualized too quickly. And those among her last painters who, after Leonardo and thanks to him, attain a larger conception of form, who see it free of its early fetters, full and surrounded by space—the gentle Fra Bartolommeo or the pure Andrea del Sarto—are precisely the men who have lost that restless ardor which characterized Tuscan art. With them and after them, intelligence still remains the weapon of Florence, but it is an intelligence that has mistaken its rôle through allowing sentiment to be effaced; it is an intelligence that takes the means for the end and exhausts itself in seeking the form outside of the inner drama that determines its function. The formulas reached by the two masters of Rome have such a masculine power of seduction that Tuscan art must needs attempt to employ them as the frame for its weakening sentiment. The violence of Benvenuto, which he too often expended in outward acts, the proud and sensual elegance of Giovanni da Bologna, and the severity of Bronzino are not the right qualities for their hands, which now handle tools with excessive ease. Florence, subjected and fallen, can do no more than brood over her melancholy passion in the bitter gardens where the shadow of the roses makes the water of the fountains tremble at the foot of San Miniato.

ROME

Chapter II. ROME AND THE SCHOOL

I

HEN the popes, at the end of the fourteenth century, returned from Avignon, Rome was a dead city. Some thousands of miserable people camped amid the circuses that had been invaded by briars and nettles, amid the shattered aqueducts and the gutted baths. Life round about was at work in the free cities. But here, nothing lived. Certain popes, touched by the spirit of Humanism, tried to create a center of attraction through which a few wandering artists, not one of whom becomes the founder of a line, will consent to pass. It is Florence and Umbria that furnish the court of Rome with the architects and painters whom it calls in to build and

decorate its churches: Gentile da Fabriano, Bernardino Rossellino, Piero della Francesca, Benozzo Gozzoli, Melozzo da Forlì, and Bramante. The inner activity of Rome will never be sufficient to supply her needs. When artists are born in Rome, we shall find that they are men of diffuse and empty mind, such as are demanded by idle societies to amuse them in their laziness and to flatter their vanity.

But it is the only shelter open to the Italian soul as it is about to ripen. At the moment when Florence succumbs, when Charles VIII, disguised as the champion of order, descends into Italy, da Vinci fertilizes Milan and is about to reveal to France the already exploded profundity of Tuscan passion. Giorgione, in a form that has attained almost its complete expansion, ushers in the whole of Venice, where Titian is appearing. The old land of Umbria is being animated anew and is looking toward Rome. The Italian artist is seeking to free himself from formulas and to spread his liberty about him. When Julius II, the warrior- and artist-pope, addresses himself to the architect Bramante, who is soon to summon his young relative Raphael, and calls Michael Angelo from Florence less than two years afterward, it is the spirit of the period that inspires him. Amid the general anarchy which delivers the Italian communes over to the foreigner, and confronted by Venice's policy of protection, Rome is indeed the only place where Italy can sum up her desires.

Rome has such strength through the sadness of her horizon, her isolation at the center of a desert of reeds and grasses, her vast ruins, and the weight of her history, that she did not permit the masters who had spent their youth in distant places to bring Italy to her

GENTILE DA FABRIANO. The Adoration of the Magi, detail.
(*Galleria Antica e Moderna, Florence.*)

without first compelling them to accept that disciplining of the will by means of which she could, after so many storms, still dominate the world. She obliged Bramante to recognize this force; she infused it into the fragile Raphael; she made it the habitual food of Michael Angelo. Like Brunelleschi, a hundred years earlier, Bramante lived in the ruins, compass in hand. It was there that he recovered the laws of Roman architecture and of all architecture, the subordination of the organ to the function, which the despotic and fantastic mind of Michael Angelo—when he himself succeeded to the direction of the building of Saint Peter's—could not apply to the problems of construction, but which, in the voluntary and rigorous inelasticity of his powerful intellect, he found again when he came to design the façade and the court of the Palazzo Farnese, a theorem of stone in which the tragic spirit of the world appears in Italy for the last time. Raphael and Michael Angelo could study the mutilated statues which were daily torn from the earth by the excavators, and the possession of which was contested by the Pope and the Roman princes. This hourly contact with the Rome of antiquity could not fail to react upon sensibilities which, like these, summarized two centuries of waiting and working.

But neither could it pervert them. They came from the heart of the race with too great an outburst and through too great a necessity for them to deviate from the path that it laid out for them. The intellectual idealism of Florence, the sentimentalism of the Umbrian painters, and the sensuality of Venice, which Sebastiano del Piombo brought to Rome, were spontaneously amalgamated with the will of the masons and the statue makers of the Empire who built the

aqueducts, the thermæ, and the circuses, and who carved upon the arches of triumph the rude bas-reliefs upon which the Roman genius had stamped its imprint. For a moment, the whole Italian soul found its realization. Never had a passion equal to this one, wherein

PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA The Finding of the Holy Cross, fresco, detail. (*San Francesco, Arezzo.*)

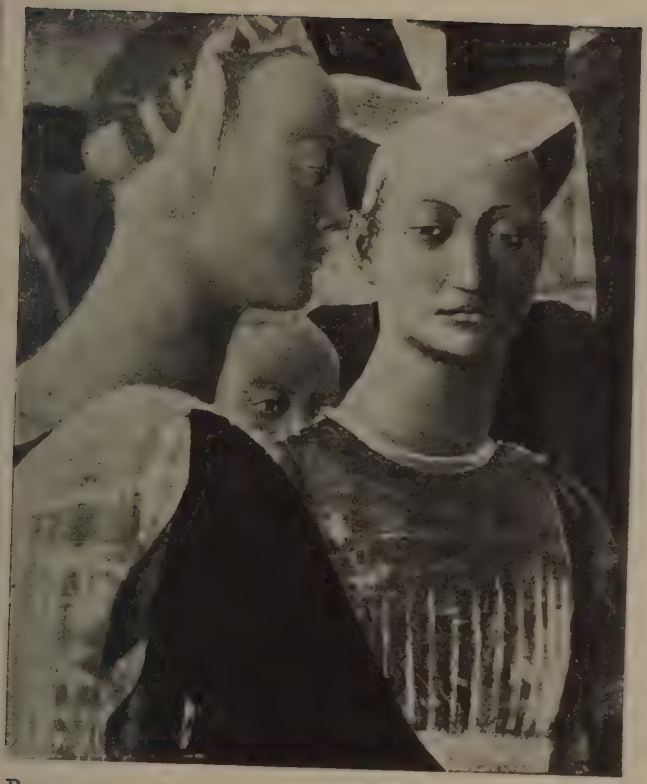
violence and gentleness, voluptuousness and asceticism, science and enthusiasm, clashed and merged in turn, accepted a similar frame without being crushed by so severe a discipline.

The Renaissance brought back form, full, sculptural, and athletic—not at all the Greek form, but rather the Roman in the predominance given to the projections of the muscles as a means of expression—but a form lifted up by such ardor that it remained wholly Italian while opening up new epochs. Never had so much

matter and spirit been welded together to recreate life in its highest unity.

When we go as far back as the currents which lead to Raphael, it is only to his education in Rome that we can attribute the rise in him of that force of which he would probably have remained ignorant had he not left Urbino or had he continued to live at Perugia or even in Florence. For in that tender and almost feminine nature which his apologists have exalted in a way that brings despair to the hearts of those who love him best there was a masculine power which doubtless helped to arouse Michael Angelo, and which unfolded with the ease, the authority, and the amplitude of things that mature naturally. Never did any man unite so many scattered and almost antagonistic elements, assimilating them with his inmost substance and giving them forth again in his work—living and spreading out freely and high above its sources while retaining all their freshness.

Beginning with the end of the fourteenth century, Umbria, from which we must consider that he came—for his sixteenth year was probably not yet passed when he entered the studio of Perugino—Umbria had grafted upon the old Sienese school a very living branch, even though it is apt to escape our attention because of the splendor shed by the great fire of Florence. With its back to the mountains, but descending with all its cities toward the gentle plain, Umbria had a soul whose piety is the greater because the proximity of Rome so frequently exposed it to invasion. It was in the heart of Umbria, in sight of Perugia, that Francis of Assisi was born; it was Umbria that first followed him. In an attenuated form, the light of that spirit still floated over its valleys.



PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA. The Queen of Sheba, fresco, detail. (*San Francesco, Arezzo.*)

Florence, and even Siena, were sufficient to themselves. Perugia was too distant from the great centers of the elaboration and of the influence of Italian energy to retain the artists that expressed it. It was toward Rome that almost all of them gravitated, bringing with them something of Siena, which had first instructed them, something of Florence whither, in general, they went to be initiated; and, by way of Urbino, Bologna, and Ferrara, bringing with them a little of Padua and Venice. Pisanello, the Veronese, after having received in Florence the lessons of Andrea del Castagno, collaborated, in Rome, with Gentile da Fabriano, the Umbrian, whose art had been formed by the Sienese. Gentile preserved their memory of the Byzantine mosaics and their blond faces with the slanting eyes; but in Rome, and more especially in Venice, he had seen the passing of the processions made splendid by the brilliance of the costumes. Of an abounding imagination, he had more curiosity than the masters of Siena, and, with a sense of movement and a love of the picturesque which they, in their gravity, could not have endured, he possessed the expansive piety of Umbria, so different from their jealous mysticism. Benozzo Gozzoli, when he worked at Rome, as he had worked practically in every part of Italy, suddenly became acquainted with this work and gained from it, in part, his taste for the exotic and his Oriental perfume.

In Rome he doubtless saw also the work of Piero della Francesca. That great painter, a nomadic artist, like all those who came to Rome at that period, was but little older than himself. His schematic landscapes certainly lived on in the memory of Gozzoli, when he covered the walls of the Campo Santo of Pisa with the

red paintings in which the delicate countrysides, traversed by the Florentines, sink into its horizons. But the nature of Gozzoli is as fantastic as that of Piero is severe and homogeneous. Moreover, though he came from a region which borders on Umbria, one more mountainous and wild, it is true, his contrast with the masters of that province is one of the astounding things which characterize Italy from Dante and Giotto to Michael Angelo and Raphael, and which contrast Machiavelli with Francis of Assisi. Piero painted sharp profiles that seem hollowed out in copper, robes embroidered with flowers as pointed as thorns, and great austere figures isolated by a pure line. Horizontal clouds were gathered in a sky where the divine dove stretched out rigid wings. A terrible majesty lifted the children of his mind above the brows of other men. His angelic musicians seemed like caryatids made to uphold the sonorous vault that invisibly extended over the gloomy highway. The deep tones of their violins were carried over into his harmonies. When he painted war, he was as hard as war; when he painted the night, one saw nothing of it save a cuirass, the point of a

PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA. The Dream of Constantine, drawing. (*British Museum.*)

PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA. Battista Sforza, Duchess of Urbino.

lance, and the faces of the sleepers. His mind was such as would be formed by the methodical and tenacious study of all the exact sciences then known. He wrote treatises on perspective. He tried to subordinate nature to the geometrical principles that had formed his mind. Thus the fusion of the living element which our sensibility reveals to us, and of the mathematical element into which our intelligence leads us, came about in his work—the strongest expression of the fierce insistence with which the Italians sought the absolute agreement between science and art; with him, the manner of seeking this accord is stricter than with Paolo Uccello, less factitious than with da Vinci. The figures in his frescoes are built one above the other like houses, with an architecture so powerful that the torsos and the shoulders, the arms, and the heads dominating the necks seem to be determined by exact calculation. Cylindrical torsos, broad shoulders, round arms, necks like columns, and spherical heads whose eyes look straight before them. One thinks of his personages almost as statues walking or kneeling, and the energy that erects them pours into their full form with the

PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA. Malatesta, detail. (*Cathedral of Rimini.*)

weight of brass. It is as pure and strong as the antique. Not one among the noble Italians, not Giotto, nor della Quercia, nor Masaccio, nor Michael Angelo expresses what is proudest in our unique adventure of

Melozzo da Forlì. Fresco. (*Church of the Holy Apostles, Rome.*)

life with greater heroism than that of Piero. He is pe haps the greatest among those invincible men wh through all the storms, oppressed by passion, resortin to murder if necessary, and accepting life as an ever day drama, went onward, their eyes fixed on somethin higher and more tragic that lay eternally ahead of ther something which they felt in their resolute and de

perate hearts. He goes through the world in company with the heroes of his frescoes, pitiless, pure as force, and inaccessible to resignation. The trunk of the tree is bare, the leaves are motionless, but something is rising and diffusing itself everywhere, a burning central sap that holds them erect and makes them hard. The somber earth itself seems to be formed of curves which the subterranean fire has fitted one into the other, as if to obey some rational power which co-ordinates its efforts. There is no more sublime work in Italy. And it is a decisive moment. Rome and Tuscany meet in Piero della Francesca, and his two principal pupils, Luca Signorelli and Melozzo da Forlì, announce, one, the approach of Michael Angelo; the other, that of Raphael.

The Umbrian current, which will touch Raphael, is accelerated with Melozzo, born like himself in that other trans-Appenine Umbria from which Gentile also came and which the Bolognese Francia was to connect with Venice. Florentine intellectualism is too difficult of approach for simple souls, and the mystic reaction to which it gave birth is too severe to enable them to find in it the easy piety that satisfies them and that cannot frighten the court of Rome, which has no love for mystics. With Melozzo da Forlì, one seems to hear the passing of the slightest breeze, the fingers of great blond angels touch their celestial harps and draw from them an undefined and distant music which is not to be confused with the storm of the trumpets of the Last Judgment. With Perugino, pious Umbria will be merely bigoted Umbria. The strong capital is misunderstood by its painters, and the square palaces, the hillside streets, and the whole heap of cubes and towers inspire Bonfigli alone with those stone landscapes in

which repose his doubtful Virgins and his too elegant angels. He who translates its needs is a man who believes in nothing, who drinks and curses and takes up religious work in order to get rich.[1] Such is the revenge of art when bigots attempt to take possession of it.

Perugino was the first to manufacture pictures of a merely ecclesiastical utility. It was not that he was without grace, a mannered grace which gives a somewhat irritating quality to his pretty Umbrian faces—blond, full, pink, and fresh, where the smile of Leonardo, now become insipid and a trifle silly, gives a curl to the flowerlike lips. Into the art of painting he introduced symmetry, which is the opposite of equilibrium, and he banished movement from space by the hardness of his sugared blues, greens, and reds, which he sets down raw and with scarcely more than a haphazard orchestration. His rounded vigor, his equivocal but robust elegance, his sharp precision in the drawing of backgrounds, slender trees, and the undulating lines of the valleys and the hills, the energy of his straight figures in which a monotonous rhythm gives a twist to the hips, places the foot on the earth, and gives to all the attitudes a strange appearance of dancing, all this explains sufficiently, nevertheless, the influence that he exercised on Raphael, who, after his departure from Urbino, spent his most impressionable years in Perugino's workshop. He felt the vigor of the rhythms—precise, very personal, very complete, and conceived almost like a motionless ballet—which Perugino stamped upon his forms in movement. It was extremely difficult for him to free himself from his master, and he died too soon ever to forget him entirely. At the end of his short and miraculous journey, he still retained,

[1] Vasari.

BONFIGLI. Funeral of Sant' Ercolano.
(*Pinacoteca Vanucci, Perugia.*)

from the painter of Perugia, the countenance of the Umbrian Virgin, which we shall scarcely find again, to tell the truth, save in his pictures of the saints—and which represent so small a part of the man! The countenance almost disappears from his last frescoes,

PINTURRICCHIO. The Return of Ulysses.
(*National Gallery, London*).

remaining as only a faint memory in his portraits of women; they are pictures as pure, as solid, as opaque and dense as a blond marble.

When he left Umbria, he passed through Siena, where, for a time, he was given work by Bernardino Pinturricchio, who, like himself, had come from the workshop of Perugia and who was returning from Rome, where he had painted the apartments of the Borgias. At Siena

he met Sodoma, his elder by a few years, who was stifling in the holy city, haunted as he was by da Vinci, foreseeing Venice, and fashioned, besides, in the school of Luca Signorelli, whose robust frescoes of Monte Oliveto he had completed. He was a singular being, a poor fakir, who was believed to have practiced the most unmentionable vices, but whose art, nevertheless, reveals the ingenuousness of a young god fallen from the cool peaks of Olympus into a century fermenting with knowledge and with pleasure. He is a kind of reversed Masaccio, not having preserved, like the Florentine hero, his original purity in his terrible thirst for knowledge; indeed, he is quite the contrary of Masaccio, as he bitterly seeks to recover his original purity through the satisfaction of that very thirst. And yet he resembles Masaccio in being destined to open a new path upon which he himself will hardly more than set foot. Quite often one can see both Michael Angelo and Raphael in him. At such times he possesses a strength and a grace which are both heroic, and the touch of corruption and of enervation which he mingles with them serves only to render more touching his nostalgic passion and the magnificence of the lyricism through which we feel his anguish. It is in this way that the most profound Platonists of Florence might have painted at the most sensual moment of the Venetian maturity. The "Wedding of Alexander and Roxana" is, in this sense, a work that is unique in the world, through the sublime accent of its masculine and disenchanted poetry which makes clear to us, under the transparence of the veils and in the soft penumbra, the irresistible and fatal voluptuousness. The nude figures—male and female—have an indescribable character that partakes at once of Eden and of Greece and that Christianity

would have animated with an ecstasy of feverish, restless love. Sodoma is a strange spirit, full of youthful strength through which the mystic perfume of the old masters of his country mounts to the restless faces. The forms hesitate in their affirmation of his science, and their athletic power grows noble in a melancholy ardor which cannot quite reveal itself. He is intoxicated with the caress of hard bosoms, slim waists, and the knees of women, in which he sees a special beauty; his wayward spirit feels the needs of men and he hesitates. All his life he hesitates. Later on, at Rome, Raphael refused to efface his decorations. He had well observed Sodoma's haughty grace, and the carriage of a conqueror enslaved by an incurable adolescence. . . . He remembered it forever; perhaps he took from it the strongest elements of that magnificent handwriting by means of which he was to express all his pride of youth and his gratitude to nature for having made him what he was.

Even the sharp and charming Pinturricchio could not retard the impulsiveness with which he cast himself upon antique form, that hymn to the nude body which was rising everywhere, breaking the yoke of Florence, bursting forth at this very hour in Venice in the mature work of Giovanni Bellini, swelling still more in the nascent work of Giorgione and of Titian, and which was to take on, with the voice of Michael Angelo, the tragic power of a new creation. He was very far, to be sure, from Pinturricchio, the meticulous technician whose bad taste, perverse and free, led to the spreading out of so much metal and so many transparent stones on the frescoes which he worked in relief. Nevertheless, in his rapid excursion through the bizarre exoticism of that singular artist, he noted the cold, delicate landscapes engraved as if on a pane of glass by means of a

PINTURRICCHIO. Saint Elizabeth, detail, fresco.
(*Borgia apartments, Vatican.*)

diamond, and the slender grace of the silhouettes tha cleft the motley crowds with gestures like those o dancers. Pinturricchio developed in central Italy tha spirit of the mirage and of far-away adventure, tha fairy fancy which Gentile de Fabriano had diffused i the peninsula, with which Gozzoli had amused auster Florence, and which Carpaccio, among the Venetians was at that moment carrying to its most astoundin limits of fantasy and lyricism. The oceans opened u in the distance, the stars rained upon the earth, th poetry of imagined worlds charmed those precociou children who knew too much and who profited by th new sensations flowing in upon them from every side t renew in them their somewhat wearied inventiveness It was from Pinturricchio, perhaps, and from the spiri of central Italy, brought to him by Perugino, tha Raphael learned the enchantment of penetrating be yond the immediate vision and the subject imposed he learned something of it even from Francia, whos vigorous but discordant and dry painting must soo have wearied him. After that he had only to seek i Florence, in the work of da Vinci and of Fra Barto lommeo, and especially in that of Masaccio, the sens of modeling and the need for architecture in a canvas later on, he had only to watch his friend Sebastiano de Piombo painting in Rome and revealing the nascen desire of Venice, to sweep into a symphony, becomin more complex as he grew older, all the confused voice in which, for a century, the enthusiasm, the pain, th fever, and the will of Italy had been mounting.

II

He summarized, as Giotto did, an imperishabl moment. It is he who was that equilibrium for whic

Italy had been seeking with so much anguish, and which the passionate clash of sensibility and intelligence prevented the crowd from realizing. One cannot help placing these two minds alongside of each other. Undoubtedly, Raphael is, with Giotto, the only one in

PERUGINO. The Combat of Love and Chastity (*Louvre.*)

the history of painting who invades all our faculties of reason and feeling with that profound gentleness. To tell the truth, it is his science that dominates; he has not the direct force that gives to the decorator of Padua and of Assisi a more virile tone, a more joyous candor, a more peaceful faith in that which he recounts upon the walls. But one does not know, when one looks at the sibyls or the frescoes of the Vatican, whether it is heroes or saints that one has before one's eyes, martyrs or philosophers, Virgins or Venuses, Jewish gods or

pagan gods; one feels that the forms harmonize with and penetrate one another, that colors call and answer one another; an undulation of harmonies that seems to have no beginning and no ending runs through one without meeting the least resistance and leaves one only the strength to hearken to the prolongation in oneself of the echo aroused by their memory.

What does he mean, and where has he seen such a union of everything that is matter and everything that is thought, everything that is feminine tenderness and everything that is male strength, everything that is the certitude of the races which have felt much and that is the wavering faith of the centuries which desire knowledge? He studied, inattentively perhaps, what had been done before him and what was being done around him; he seemed scarcely to look at the infinitely profound and multiple world of movements, colors, and forms; he gave ear to the sounds about him and breathed in the perfume of flowers and of women with that indifferent fervor that belongs only to a being who sees harmony springing from his very footsteps and love approaching him without his having summoned it; all of this he united in himself as in a sonorous center, without too closely investigating its source; and the whole of it, after having melted unresistingly at the hearth of his sentiment, came forth from him in waves as full, as calm, and as difficult to resist as the mysterious rhythm that governs the beating of hearts; that causes the seasons to be born, to die, and to be reborn; that causes the sun to burst forth and sink each morning and each evening. Long after the death of Raphael, Michael Angelo, even though he had not loved him, was perhaps thinking of the younger man more than of himself when he said: "Beautiful painting is religious

SIGNORELLI. The Promulgation of the Law. (*Sistine Chapel.*)

in itself, for the soul is lifted up by the effort that it has to make to attain perfection and to mingle with God: beautiful painting is an effect of that divine perfection, a shadow from the brush of God; it is a music, a melody. Very lofty intelligences alone can grasp it."

Raphael is one of the most calumniated men in history, and calumniated by those who have been loudest in their praise. The inexhaustible youth that shines from him has been ascribed to the fact that he died young, but it is accentuated in one work after another; and if he had lived to be very old it would not have ceased to renew itself, because it had existed before him and was to survive him, even as the spring-times and the autumns, which continue to produce despite the winters heaped up upon them. The ease with which he seizes upon a thousand objects, a thousand scattered facts of life, of nature, of history, of art, which he did not in himself produce, for the purpose of organizing them into harmonious images where nothing of the objects and of the original facts subsists save the lofty emotion which they called forth—all has given rise to the charge of an almost shocking propensity to assimilate and to imitate his work. And because one must follow his work step by step and make an effort oneself in order to appreciate the meaning of the effort which he had to expend in order to raise Perugian "piety pictures" to the level of the generalizations of the Vatican and the Farnesine, people have wondered, in a dull way, at his skill. Copious tears have been shed over the hundred Virgins, that are often so sugary—and for the most part unauthentic—that issued from his studio, so that one almost forgets the twenty portraits which make him, with Titian, the greatest Italian painter of character and which cause

us to feel, rising from the senses to the mind of this all-powerful youth, a force of construction in depth which would have made him an Italian Rembrandt had he lived thirty years longer.

LUCA SIGNORELLI. Drawing. (*Louvre.*)

There was in this painter, molded in his very flesh which yet never ceased its adoration, a little of the bronze of the armor which the fighters of that time left off to don the habits of the court. He sculptured the long bony hands with the golden bands of their rings and the pure dense planes of the faces with the polished skeleton covered by their muscles. "Julius II," "Bindo Altoviti," "Inghirami," "Leo X," and "Maddalena Doni" are of those absolute forms which dwell wholly in the memory, as if, throughout their entire surface, they reach the inner walls of the skull. Their mind is made of the same metal as themselves; it escapes neither through the eyes nor through the gest-

ures, but is enclosed within the block they make, calm i
the depth of the dull magnificence which the movemen
of the reds gives to the bare background, to the arm
chairs, to the carpets, to the robes, to the air itself, an

School of Signorelli. The Death of Moses, detail, fresco.
(*Sistine Chapel.*)

to the reflections on the clean-shaven faces. The black
are so pure that they seem to light up the red shadow
He has tones that are opaque, blacks and reds, and thes
stand almost alone, abandoned to themselves, like
mineral which has become quite solidified at the botton
of a stone crucible. And yet these tones penetrate on
another; they have their profound harmonies, and ar
full and compact like the forms which they create
There is no power in art that surpasses the power o
these portraits, red cardinals on white mules harnesse

with red, great bodies dressed in green or in black which kneel gravely, figures of authority or of violence, figures of youth also, of pride, of enthusiasm, isolated in their strength or bursting forth here and there in the vast compositions like wide-opened flowers on the surface of water that ebbs and flows.

This endless ebb and flow, which Giotto had understood, and which proceeds from the pediments of the temples of Greece and Sicily to the paintings of Raphael by way of the combinations of lines of the Arab decorators, is the whole Mediterranean ideal. Italy had been seeking it ever since Masaccio, because it was he who wrote into the surface of his frescoes the intelligence of the world, that sense of continuity which the succession of planes imposes on our instinct, but which does not suffice to reveal its nature to our mind, eager for clearly stated reasons and for exact demonstration. It is the arabesque, the rational expression of the living form, that the straight line, which is death, could not translate and from which the too metaphysical absolute of the circular line would exclude all possibility of renewal and of movement; only curved lines, undulating and continuous, can describe the living form in its flux and reflux, its flights and its downfalls, its repose and its effort, still leaving to each of the elements that it unites in a common life its personality and its function. It was through the arabesque that Raphael defined and realized the intellectual and sensual ideal which the Renaissance demanded, when the means for the social ideal which the Middle Ages had embodied in their life was exhausted. With Raphael, the passage from form to form is as subtle as it is from color to color, in the case of the Venetians or even Velasquez. Consider, in the "Heliodorus," the huddled group of terrified

Sodoma. Adam and Eve, detail.
(*Accademia di Belle Arti, Siena.*)

mothers, their children in their arms. Consider, in the "Parnassus," the concatenation of the musical rhythm, the intertwining groups of the women, the union, as if in a marriage, their graces which blend, their gentle heads inclined toward each other as they look over the rounded shoulders from which their bare arms flow with a single movement. Consider, above all, the fresco of the "Sibyls" or that of the "Jurisprudence," where the forms are so well adapted to the surfaces to be decorated that they seem to give birth to those surfaces through their volumes and their directions. Consider how one gesture explains another and compels a reply; how tresses, heads, arms, and shoulders affirm, in the effortless combination of the curves of their attitudes, that there is in nature not a single inert or living form that is not bound up with all the others; consider how the mind is led without a halt from one end of life to the other. With Raphael, the line of the Florentines, which was born and kept alive with so much difficulty, frees itself, and defines on the surface and realizes in depth the succession of the planes and the continuity of the modeling; and, in a harmony where the grays and the reds, the greens, the blacks, the lilacs, and the silver-whites yield themselves to the humble substance of the walls which fixes them forever, the unity of expression of line, mass, and color is affirmed for the first time.

It is in this that we seek the reason for the power which Raphael has exercised over all the painters of modern Europe, even when they had seen him only through copies or engravings, even when they did not love him. Upon the mind of men, for whom the world of forms is the revealer of the world of ideas, he imprints a mark sinuous and precise whose significance

one must know if one is to follow it without peril. I
he had brought into painting no more than an attemp
to return to the ideal of the antique, as in the paga
figures of the Farnesine, where the beautiful nud
divinities, framed by heavy garlands of foliage, c
fruits, and pot-herbs, recall the abundant strength c
the decorators of Pompeii, which in turn offer such
wealth of other lessons besides, he would not b
Raphael. He would be, with Michael Angelo and be
fore Sodoma, only the most brilliant initiator of tha
plastic rhetoric which misled Italy and from which a
of Europe was to suffer. But his glory was to affir
that individualism could not live in the desert, tha
for the greater harmony of the spirit, it must find som
way of demonstrating the need that men have to defi
the relationship among the universal forms when th
conditions of their existence have not permitted the
to find that relationship in the social bond itself. Th
arabesque is the translation into plastics of the highes
individualism.

The crowds of the north have no need of it; th
Gothic men scarcely suspected its existence. To under
stand this one must have tasted of the spectacle of th
worshipers in a cathedral of the north and in an Italia
basilica. The northern crowd is united by a singl
sentiment; whether it is sincere or factitious is of n
importance. It stands up, sits down, and kneels at th
same moments and with the same gestures, the men o
one side, the women on the other. All the heads are o
the same level, all the faces look toward the same point
The bond is invisible, but present. Feeling is wha
makes these people respond all at once to the senti
mental appeal which comes from the priest, from th
singing, or from the organ. In Italy, the men and th

SODOMA. The Marriage of Alexandra and Roxana, detail.
(*Farnesine.*)

women mingle. Some remain standing, others are seated, some look at the altar, others turn their backs to it, groups form and melt away again, people walk about the church, and conversations arise or are interrupted.

RAPHAEL. The Marriage of the Virgin, detail.
(*Brera, Milan.*)

Each one is there for himself, each one is hearkening only to the passion that brought him here, the mystic exaltation, the sorrow, the hatred, the love, the curiosity, or the admiration, and it is that alone which determines his gesture, makes him sit down or arise, walk about or remain motionless, which carries him to his knees, with a child erect in his arms, or makes him prostrate himself upon the pavement, against which he strikes his forehead. There is no people in Europe less Christian than this one, which is why the Church had to be organized here in order to maintain an

appearance of solidarity, as opposed to the individual. Italian Catholicism is a social arabesque.

That is the reason, also, why the plastic arabesque was born of the meditation of the painters of this country. Since our nature requires a harmony so powerful that in order to satisfy it we are willing to pass through sorrow, and since we did not find the desired harmony in the sentiment of the multitudes, it was indeed necessary for us to unite the separate beings—erect, kneeling, or laid low by the wind of warring passions—in a single line, sinuous, firm, and uninterrupted, a line that should not permit a single one among them to escape from the living harmony which was divined by the senses of the artists and which was created by their will.

RAPHAEL. Tommaso Inghirami. (*Pitti Palace.*)

Moreover, when one surveys Italy, as one comes out from the Tuscan hills, from the Roman circus, from the Lombard plains, and as one goes from one height to another, one sees that the whole country undulates

like the sea. Whether seen from above and from afar, when one forgets the convulsions of the earth and the tempests of passion in the souls of men, everything in Italy shows the necessity for her returning to herself: the outlines of the mountains, the ramparts of the high hills which lead the cities built upon them down to the plains by the winding roads; the cities themselves tell the same tale with their steeply sloping streets that separate like a river, pass under the cradle of the old vaults, and seem to caress the walls with the ebbing of their bare pavements; and we see this character of Italy again in its language, a golden liquid flowing over iron sands, and we see it in the history of the country, in the even light, that emanates from it although it has passed, almost without transition, during thirty centuries, from the proudest summits to the most barren depths. . . . And there is something of all of this in the genius of Raphael Sanzio of Urbino.

And yet something is lacking. The decorative compositions do not always respond to the central principle of art, which is to bear witness to life regardless of the pretext for it and of the fate which is reserved for it; Raphael does not seem to suffer from having all his acts prescribed for him and from depending on the caprice of an old man who may die any day. And whatever the liberty given him to express himself as he thinks best, one sees a little too clearly that he is not his own master, and that he is not galled by the fact. It is the art of a man who is too happy. We feel a certain lack of emotion in ourselves when we are before his frescoes. The work of those who have suffered is a stronger wine for us. His arabesque is often apart from himself and, despite the plenitude of the form, its direction is not always determined by the sentiment that animates it,

RAPHAEL. Parnassus, detail, fresco. (*Vatican.*)

and a decorative mask covers the human face. It is only just to say that he died at the age when the majority of superior men begin to catch a glimpse of the idea that the beauty of gesture always responds to the requirements of the intimate movements which it interprets. There are, in some of his last paintings, the "Sistine Madonna" and the "Heliodorus" especially, complete envelopments of arms and of breasts, and a drama of lives closely interwoven, which show an immense and continuous expansion of his heart. In the "Miraculous Draught of Fishes" and in the "Fire in the Borgo," the strength and the splendor of the gestures, which compel us to view the human beings as statues come to life, attest his discovery of the nobility of his mind—a nobility which the "Farnesine" attests, thanks to the fidelity of his pupils, with an august, virile, and majestic splendor. For a decisive realization, he would have needed ten or fifteen years more and a greater amount of will-power to resist his tendency to squander himself through his power of love. Doubtless, Michael Angelo would not have ceased to hate him, since, even in Raphael's last works, in which he renders homage to the power of his rival by yielding to his influence, Michael Angelo found a pretext for despising him. But the unfailing esteem, in which man through his moral ascendency holds those who are strong, would probably have given him, in his jealousy, an opportunity to wring from Raphael even greater pride and unity, in order to complete his subjugation. As the static art of Raphael developed and borrowed from the universe an increasing number of elements, to be organized into increasingly complex compositions, Michael Angelo continued to project his dynamism farther and farther into the forms in movement, which the formid-

able weight of Italian thought was precipitating into his spirit from the depths of four centuries.

III

If his life was simply one long drama, it was because he separated himself from men too much to commune with them, and because he had too high an opinion of mankind to accept their inferiority and admit their baseness. But we compel other men to forget their ills when we force our own into silence and open the gates of the world to those intellectual harmonies which alone go beyond sorrow. "Italian painting," he said, "will never cause a tear to be shed." He led those who know how to suffer to the threshold of heroic happiness.

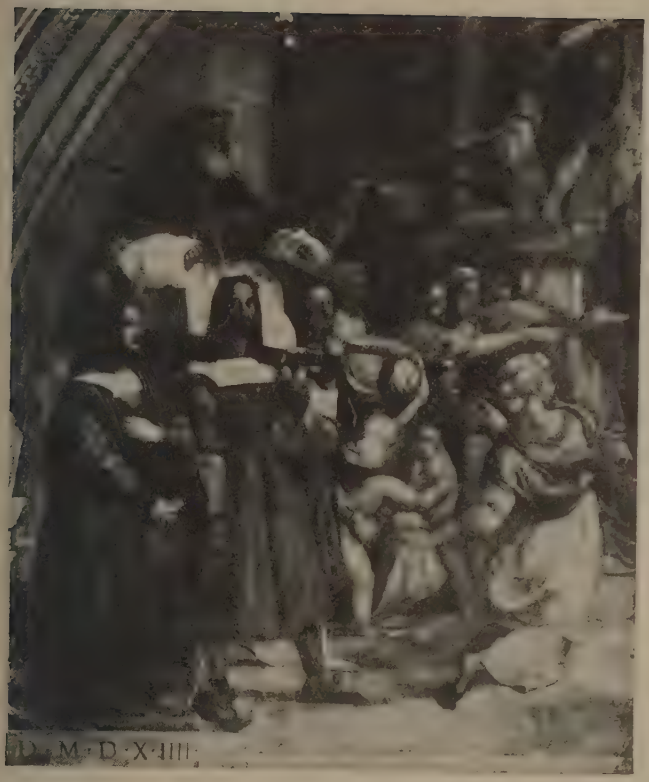
RAPHAEL. A Child, detail of a fresco. (*Accademia di San Luca, Rome.*)

He came from Florence. Born amid its last storms, he had in him the fire of the passion through which she had lived. He had appeared there twenty years after da Vinci, at the moment when Florence was reaching the most feverish point in her history. He had read Plato. He was never without his Dante. A pupil of Ghir-

landajo, the most direct of the painters of the period, he sought the intimacy of the works of Giotto, of Masaccio of della Quercia, of Donatello, and Piero della Francesca He knew Savonarola and followed him. At twenty-six years of age, he had torn from the marble the gigantic David which summarizes the sorrowing youth and the tense energy of the city.

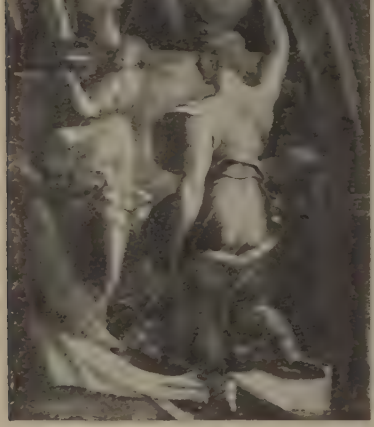
He was, or wanted to be, everything that she had been: a constructor, a painter, a sculptor, and a poet In order to become acquainted with the human body he shut himself up with cadavers until the odor drove him out of doors. If the whole of the dream and all the science of the spirited city were in accord in the work of da Vinci, they never ceased to struggle with each other in him. His great soul was like the summit of a wave which rose and fell with the surges of energy and with the crises resulting from the cowardice of the unhappy city of his birth. Out of despair he left it When he returned, it was to try to save it. Perhaps alone in fallen Italy, his heart bore the weight of her servitude: "It is sweet for me to sleep; it is sweeter for me to be of stone; as long as misfortune and shame endure. To see nothing, to feel nothing, therein lies my greatest happiness. Do not, I beg, awaken me! Speak low! . . ."

On his way from Florence to Rome, at Orvieto, he saw the newly painted frescoes of Luca Signorelli, who had already covered the walls of the Convent of Monte Oliveto with powerful decorations in which the discipline of Piero della Francesca revived the enervated soul of the old masters of Florence. Here he saw Herculean forms, twisted under their garments, strive to burst their bonds in their explosion of strength and fury. Or, again, the human body, stretched like a



RAPHAEL. Heliodorus Expelled from the Temple. (*Vatican.*)

bundle of cords, had become a thing of mechanical expression where the nerves, almost bare, hurled passion into the limbs, in short, repeated jets of flame. These frescoes were imprinted in the memory of the young man as if made by the gashes of a sword. They were the first anatomical nudes. The Italian science of the human body was unveiled in them with uncompromising precision. Save a few archangels clad in iron who guard the gates of heaven, all the figures were nudes. There were skinned corpses, painted directly, reanimated, and cast back into the current of life with incredible violence. The foreshortening was violent; bones cracked, jaws contracted, tendons were hard as metal cables, men and women howled; there was a ferocious welter of bodies martyrized by demons whose membranous wings stretch into sinister veils as in a heaven devoid of hope. A great work. Passion, knowledge, everything, indeed, moved toward a common goal. When his son dies, Signorelli, suppressing his sorrow, undresses him and paints him, without a tear. His great virile drawing strikes and strikes again



RAPHAEL. The Conflagration of the Borgo, detail, fresco. (*Vatican.*)

like a steel blade. Savanorola had just hurled his anathema at the times and been burned alive on the Piazza della Signoria. A breath of fear forces repentant Italy to bow down, and although Signorelli is more healthy than Botticelli, and little given to mysticism, he, as well as Botticelli, obeys the voice of the prophet casting into the Christian hell that which was thought of at that time as pagan form—as if a form could live otherwise than through its relationship with the whole of society, its atmosphere, its history; as if it ever returned to the earth in the same shape in which it had appeared before.

Alone with these great memories, Michael Angelo lived at Rome. There he saw six popes die, never yielding to their menaces nor obeying their orders, save to revenge himself for his slavery through the freedom of his art. He needed that frame in order to exalt his dream and to make it bear witness to the power within him, a power through which he could cope with the most overwhelming problems. His surroundings were sufficiently materialistic and demoralized for him to decide to wrap himself in silence and to develop in him that formidable sense of shame that inspired him to strip the gods naked in order to crush the conclave of cardinals under the weight of primitive heroism.

His entire life is a conflict between the passion that dragged him on toward the admirable appearances of material Nature and the will for purification which his pride imposed upon him. With such a love for what exists, for what moves, for what is defined by a volume in space, one must suffer through one's inability to be all-inclusive. And he who, in such a state of absolute sensual power, feels that the encounter between the soul and the flesh would calm that suffering, such a man

RAPHAEL. Portrait of Baldo, detail. (*Doria Gallery, Rome.*)

is accursed, but he may become a hero if he refuses to exhaust his desire and reserves his own power of exaltation to exalt the men who are to come and for the glory of his spirit. Resistance to love is not an ideal to all men—to propose it would be the ruin of the world—but for those who are haunted and pursued relentlessly by love, resistance to love, by causing the repressed forces of tenderness and desire to flow back upon themselves, may bring about inner government of their being and the sovereign domain over the forms of the universe.

What incomparable power is promised to him who gathers up the absolute science which those who came before him seem to have prepared for his use, who builds in such fashion that his work shall resist the daily assault of the temptations accumulated by two centuries of intense material and moral civilization, and who appears at the culminating point of the thought of a people, the weight of whose fall he converts into his own ascent! Italy, by searching her heart and by examining thoroughly into her soul and her body, by demanding of the dead humanities the secret of life, and the secret of death from living humanity, had forged the language of her passion in blood and in fever. What was she now to say with it? Was there then no direction to give to the life of our feelings? Must we, like Raphael, unite all its currents into an indifferent harmony wherein we would be able to find repose only at the moment when we yielded ourselves to it? Beyond the natural rhythm which a great spirit, free from disquietude, could find in a world in which the hour was sounding for it to satisfy the desire which had dictated its effort, were there no other rhythms which could console the despair of men when they came to feel that

RAPHAEL. Venus and Cupid, fresco. (*Farnesine.*)

the equilibrium attained for a moment was escaping them? After Mozart, Beethoven. The greatness of Michael Angelo is that he understood and said that positive happiness is not accessible to us, that humanity seeks repose so that it may escape further suffering and, in order that it may not die, plunges back into suffering as soon as it has found repose. The martyrdom of Florence, torn unwittingly between its need for defining form and its wild spirituality, is born of its own uncertainty. Michael Angelo, in whom this martyrdom is prolonged, seizes upon certitude, but expresses the very pain which one endures in seizing it. The central composition of the ceiling of the Sistine is the center of his thought. The serpent whose coils twine around the solitary tree is at the same time the temptation which bends over man and woman, and the angel that drives them forth from Paradise. There is no possibility of choice. If we will not taste of knowledge, we shall not taste of pleasure. As soon as we have knowledge we begin to suffer. Michael Angelo reveals to men that they can hope for nothing beyond an equilibrium which does not satisfy them and, embittered at the idea of his impotence, he disdainfully presents the equilibrium to them.

Sometimes—and the greater part of his sculptures avow it—he succumbs. And then he is seized with wrath. It is in vain that he passes his days and even his nights, the lamp at his forehead, locked up in his studio with the marble which he attacks from all sides —he, small and frail—and though he makes it quiver with every chip that flies, the material dominates him. Donatello and above all della Quercia were sculptors more than he was. There are some heroic pieces: the somber "Night," and the pregnant "Dawn," with her

MICHAEL ANGELO. Decorative Figure, fresco.
(*Sistine Chapel.*)

arms and her legs as full in form as the boughs of a tree, and her countenance where despair rises with her awakening; there is his "Torso," with its knotted limbs, its cracking knees, its twist, its terrible folds. Not an ensemble survives. The slave may twist his chains, the knees of the Virgin may support the weight of a

MICHAEL ANGELO. Night. (*Medici Tomb, Florence.*)

god, the child may turn to bite at the mother's breast, and the dusk and sleep may pour darkness upon the brows and blot out the eyes: the drama lies elsewhere. Our emotion is like a revolt, a disquietude with which we are vexed when we know that we have been touched by it. It comes from his exhausting struggle against a rebellious material whose violent caprices he cannot control.

The error of the last schools of Greece had not, however, escaped him. He was repelled by the play of light and shade on carved stone. He knew that the

expression of volume in space was the extreme limit of plastic effort, line being really no more than a conventional sign, and color having only an uncertain and variable existence, determined by the hour, the season, the lighting, and the most fleeting shades of our sensi-

MICHAEL ANGELO. Dawn. (*Medici Tomb, Florence.*)

bility. He rejected polychromy itself and demanded that the marble be as naked as the idea. He has said all of this in terms so clear that one gets into the way of seeing in them only the danger which they conceal, the danger into which the doctrinaires of the following century will fall and in whose toils David will be caught. "Painting is beautiful in the measure that it approaches sculpture; sculpture is bad the more it approaches painting."

How was it that he did not perceive that he himself was much nearer sculpture when he covered the walls with frescoes than when he attacked the material of the wall? Each time that he takes up the chisel, he is the victim of his practically absolute science of muscular anatomy. The tempest that thunders within his forms is dispersed at the barrier of their muscles. It does not radiate in infinite waves like the spirit which issues from Egyptian statues, in balanced waves like the spirit that issues from the marbles of Olympia, or in penetrating waves like the spirit that issues from the old French sculptures. He composed movement into its material elements. He knew too well how the muscles were made. It was in vain that he kneaded and twisted them in all directions; he permits himself, only on the rarest occasions, to gather them all into synthetic masses which render his thought with a vigor proportionate to the degree in which they define the architecture of the bodies of which they form a part. If, in general, he had a wrong idea of the great expressive surfaces, it was because he knew the mechanism of expression too well.

But painting liberates him. At first, he does not want to paint the Sistine. Then, through weakness, he yields, learns all by himself an art which he did not know before, and remains shut in for four years in the chapel, alone with God. His brushes obey the fury of a mind for which marble, a material too hard to work, had ever been sluggish in its response. When he had produced half of a colossus, he had already passed beyond it—other torments, other victories, and other defeats demanded their turn. It was almost never that he finished his statues, and never his monumental ensembles. He will finish the Sistine, the most spacious

decorative ensemble in the world. He is a great painter in spite of himself, and in spite of himself it is in painting that he is himself.

In this art, his science serves him. He can cause to stand out from the wall the volumes that he wants; he can send others back into it; he can dazzle us by the audacity and the violence of his foreshortenings and pour forth darkness and light at will. He can subject his tempestuous dream to the yoke of his terrible will. When the scaffoldings fall, there are a hundred living colossuses on the immense vault, in groups or solitary, a hundred Herculean bodies that cause the temple to tremble and seem to create the tempest that rolls in the structure; their clamor merges with the flight of the clouds and the maelstroms of the suns.

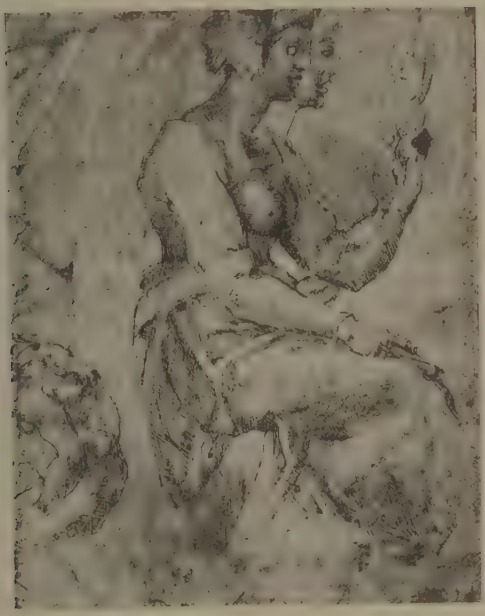
If one has not been there, if one has not seen that work, one cannot imagine it. One must hear it. I have spoken; one hears it. It is the drama of Genesis, but more exalted. The symbolism of the formidable biblical mind multiplies its force upon contact with reason. One sees nothing but man confronted with his destiny. One knows surrounding life no more. One is at the edge of the primitive abyss. The burned-out blues, the silver grays, and the dull reds combine into something like a pale, powdered gold like that which trails in the wake of comets and with which the Milky Way fills the spaces of the heavens. God wanders in his solitude. The stars are born. The lightning passes from the finger of God to the finger of man. Our ancestress, young and naked, comes forth from sleep, showing her breasts and her flanks which shall not be exhausted. The first sorrow comes forth from the first hope. The deluge crushes life and draws the figures

MICHAEL ANGELO. The Libyan Sibyl, fresco, detail
(*Sistine Chapel.*)

into an embrace in order to rend asunder more readily the limbs that knot themselves with other limbs like vines. Powerful maternities are divined in the shadows, the prophets thunder, the Sibyls open and close the book of fate. At the bottom of the decoration in the last days, primitive bestiality piles up bodies like bunches of grapes in fortuitous embrace, the temple crumbles, the Cross itself is uprooted by the storm. The wind which arose in the beginning blows until the end. The figures of beauty, of fecundity, and of youth are whirled in it like leaves.

Doubtless, he is the only one who has dared to seize upon painting in order to express the moral tragedy, and has remained unconquered. When one possesses form to such a degree, when it pours out of one with the leaps of the muscles, the tortures of the flesh, and the horror of meditation upon forgetfulness and death, one has the right to use it like a weapon and to command it to obey the mind. It was as if a man, who had been swept away by a river, had had the power to turn suddenly to stop it with his two hands and breast, and to force it back into its course. On the eve of her long sleep, Italy found once more the iron words of Dante. Greece had discovered her soul in form, Israel had attempted to impose her soul upon form without dreaming of the living grandeur that words, which are form also, gave to her. There came a man who had at once the senses of an artist and the heart of a prophet, and who caused his poem to leap forth from the shock of passion and of knowledge. All the forces which the philosophers oppose to one another he possessed in the highest degree of exaltation, each one demanding its rights uncompromisingly; but his will dominated them all and harmonized them. Sick and suffering, he lived

eighty-eight years and saw his race decline—he, who was his race attaining its maturity. The soul of a giant dwelt in his weak body, and it was to small-skulled athletes that he confided the mission of expressing



Michael Angelo. Study. (*Musée de Chantilly.*)

thought which, in its harmony, rises as high as that of Æschylus. His prophetic fury did not prevent an invincible grace from manifesting itself at every moment. He doubted everything and himself, he was afraid of everything and of himself, yet when he took up his tools he asserted himself with the most brilliant courage. He loved only one woman and she would not return his

love. He lived alone because he knew that there were in him such wells of tenderness that a terrible modesty prevented him from opening them. Chaste and scorning the flesh, he embraced all flesh in the sensuality of his intelligence. His virginity made fruitful the dead womb of Italy.

Never was there a man less mystic nor more religious than that one. He knew too much to surrender himself to the troubled intoxication of the mystics, he was too well aware of his ignorance not to be religious. His work is the epic of the intellectual Passion. Whatever the tortures that await him, his intelligence will overtake the feeling that runs ahead of it and will compel it, despite its revolt, to surrender itself. Reason attains its summit, but it is coupled with a lyricism too intense to permit it to devour itself. From that time on, freed from all the ancient dogmas, standing above Christianity which is almost dead and paganism which cannot be revived and Judaism which willed to know nothing save the spirit, Michael Angelo is face to face with the divine idea; he grapples with the eternal symbolism. When he touches the supreme symbol, when he feels himself upon the brink of the final abstraction, when he approaches God, he is seized with terror at the idea of his solitude, he makes a desperate effort, and, realizing in a flash the highest equilibrium he violently forces form into the void of which he has just caught a glimpse.

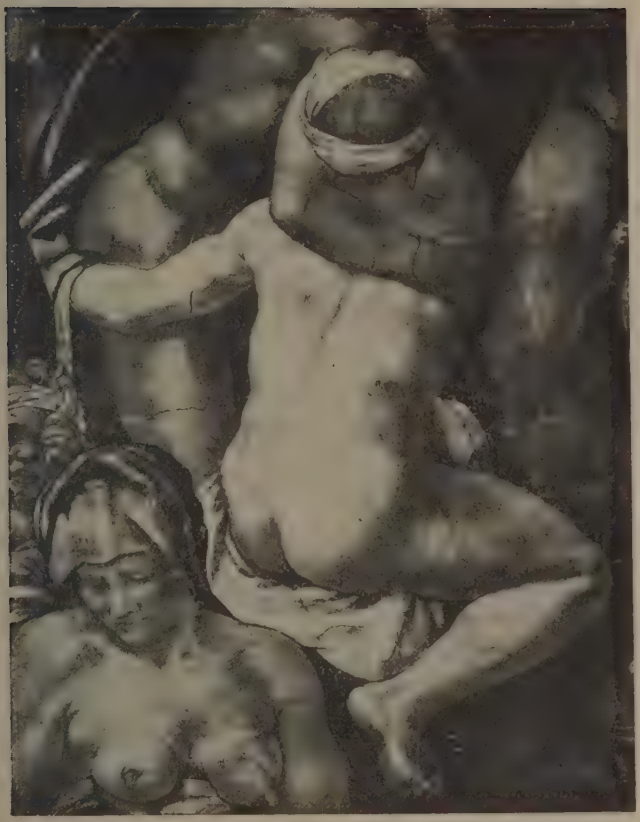
IV

Works of this stature are made for the distant future. Their shadow is fatal; it stifles everything that grows around them. Italy no longer had the strength and the faith which would have been necessary to endure the

MICHAEL ANGELO. Creation of Man, detail. *(Sistine Chapel.)*

truths that were offered her by the last of the Italians. Had she comprehended the meaning of the symbol of the Sistine and consented still to suffer in order to understand, she would have succumbed none the less. She had expended too much passion in the struggle, and, in consequence, was annihilated. Never had any world, in coming to its maturity, known the despair which inheres in the force of Michael Angelo, nor the kind of surrender to lassitude which one often feels arising in that of Raphael. For four centuries, one, the same as the other, was to create innumerable victims, all those who could not extract from the vigor of a growing people a sentiment sufficiently virile to resist their formal instructions. When we know too many things, we can no longer discover anything. The School, indeed, begins to be organized during the lifetime of Michael Angelo, with his pupils and those of Raphael: Giulio Romano, Giovanni da Udine, and Daniele da Volterra. The Accademia di San Luca is founded less than fifty years after his death. Italy was to teach those unable to understand that in order to create masterpieces it was necessary to include families of wrestlers in the "composition" of a canvas.

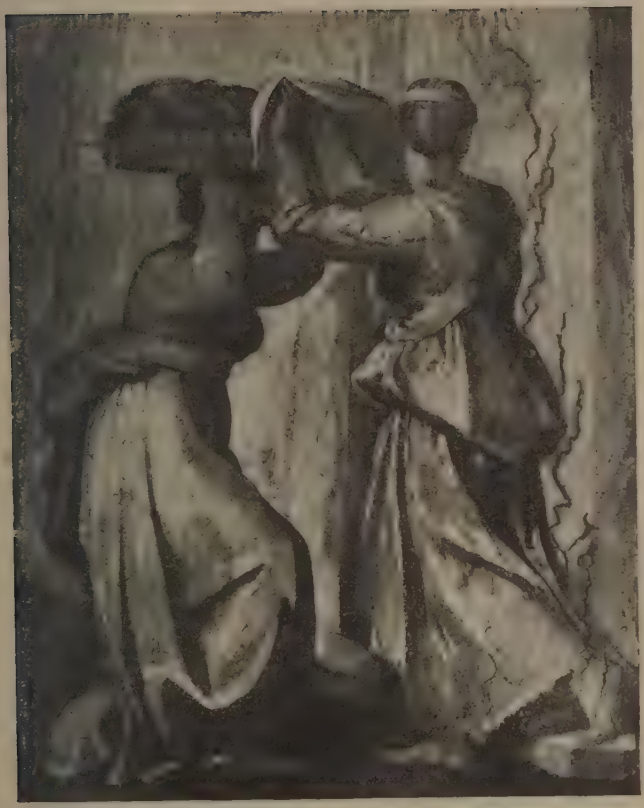
It was Italy, to be sure, who revealed "composition" to the world and who, first through Giotto, then through the masters of Rome and Venice, used it with the greatest ease, power, and authority. Without her we should have had neither Rubens nor Rembrandt nor Poussin, who are great composers. "Composition" is the introduction of intellectual order into the chaos of sensations. Composition is necessary. But composition is personal. It belongs only to that artist who is capable, through his own power, of discovering in nature a few essential directions which reveal to him the law of



MICHAEL ANGELO. The Deluge, fresco, detail. (*Sistine Chapel.*)

her general movement. If composition does not expres
a living unity of forms, of colors, and of sentiments, i
is a worn-out garment that covers nothing. A fruit,
glass, any bit of life, or anything, two tones set besid
each other harmoniously, take on an eternal value i
contrast with the "well-composed" large picture whic
expresses no intimacy between him who conceived i
and the still inexhaustible world of sensations and o
ideas.

The School does not kill life, for it appears only durin
the death struggle of the races. But it acts as a brak
on the effort of those who go toward life; it crushe
their last struggles or compromises the first revolts tha
occur at the dawn of new societies. It sows ruin roun
about it by counseling men to forget the heroic hour
when they lived in innocence. Outside of its incessan
attacks on sensibility—which I should call negligible i
in the blotting out of a single sensibility amid suc
isolation, its loss would not react upon all the others—
outside the question of the men whom the School ha
led astray, its greatest crime is, that for three centurie
it intervened between our love and the influence of th
primitives and permitted the vandalism of academi
æsthetes to trample upon so many flowers. The prim
itives were not acquainted with anatomy and did no
know how to compose. Their form was empty of mus
cles, but it was full of life. An irresistible sentimen
impressed its rhythm upon their ensembles, a profoun
sentiment which leaves our emotion free spontaneously
to establish the missing connections through an auto
matic operation of the senses. Later on, through
reaction, it was only the primitives who were loved
and in the name of the primitives men condemned, no
the School, but those from whom the School sprang



MICHAEL ANGELO. Judith and Holophernes, detail of fresco. (*Sistine Chapel.*)

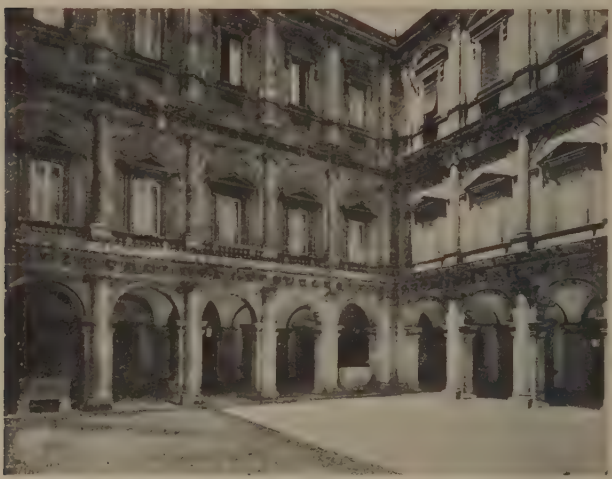
And that is not the least of its offenses. When the power of primitive feeling, which is almost always obscure and scattered among many men, is concentrated in a single one and is illumined by contact with a supreme intelligence, the great mystery is fulfilled. We reach one of the summits of those waves of harmony which are traced in the memory of generations by the energy of living races.

Venice, although she had felt, through Tintoretto, the influence of Michael Angelo, possessed so much personal force that for more than half a century she still resisted the current. But outside of her, all Italy, which had culminated in Rome, had to submit to the power of Rome. Baccio Bandinelli, Benvenuto, Vasari, and Giovanni da Bologna introduced to Florence Michael Angelo—him in whom she recognized too much of herself not to abandon herself to him. Her natural violence was less reconcilable with Raphael, from whom the local Roman School derived,—Bologna soon following Michael Angelo also. As to da Vinci, who had left but a few rare works there, she had no memory of him. The influence of that strange man had spread more especially in northern Italy, where it combined for a time with that of the Roman masters, through whom much of it was very quickly destroyed. The Milanese School, which it revived, remained almost a local manifestation and practically died with the delicate frescoes of Bernardino Luini, who treated the form, inherited from his master, with more abandon, and transported it into the blond and gentle atmosphere of Borgognone and the Lombard painters. If Ghirlandajo had known how to attain a sense of depth in the construction of his form, it is with that accent that he would have spoken of the familiar and intimate life of

the Italians. And if da Vinci had been attracted by that life, he would have told its story no more vividly than did Luini. This painter summarizes and expresses, with the greatest amount of force and nobility, an aspect of the Italian soul, and the most unexpected one. It is an Italy without affectation, apparently knowing no anguish, a solid country engrossed in its work like a land of the north. But it is peopled with young gods who would do the work of men. No one has loved Italian adolescence with greater pride—its easy and charming gestures, the vast crowds on whose faces the same smile wanders, as if the spirit of da Vinci were still lighting up the mouths that have grown more sensual and the eyes that have softened. In ashen landscapes, beside brooks and springs, plump young girls come to sit, with hesitating neck and shoulders, their massive arms and legs nevertheless elegant, round, tepid, and made as if they were composed of packed snow. It is strangely real: the women take off their stockings and fill their baskets, the men work the soil, both are simply Lombard peasants; but the noble spirit of the idyll, a singular heroism, and a proud and lively delicacy intervene to ennoble the whole art. There is nothing gentler or more mysterious. An undulating grace, a subtle charm, something indefinite, almost immaterial, floats through the work; it is like strong writing which we yet find difficult to grasp; the exquisite soul of the artist seems to hover around it, his voice discreetly insinuating, the charmingly pouting faces of his people hesitating between irony and tenderness, and never quite coming to a decision. Rome could not touch this man who rarely left his province and who, born the same year as Michael Angelo, died a third of a century before him.

Moreover, research work in formal architecture was more attractive to those solid Italians of the north—soldiers and husbandmen—than the dramatic dynamism that was the constant demand of the Romans.

Da Vinci, with his insistence on construction, meant more to them. The static art of Luini has admirable



Michael Angelo. Court of the Farnese Palace, Rome.

power, and the bold ceilings which Correggio painted in the library and in the cathedral of Parma are perhaps of more importance for their structural science, that recurs in all his other pictures, than for their inner movement. The spirit of da Vinci had impressed him all the more forcefully that he found in it an encouragement to accentuate the ambiguous character of a work through which the art program of the Jesuits was to define itself, that program foretold fifty years earlier

by the last painters of Umbria who so speedily completed the perversion of Italian genius. A voluptuous painter, hovering about the beautiful, moist forms within the groves drenched by blue mists where mythological heroes stretch out in their indolence, he yields to the influence of Michael Angelo only in so far as it leads him to envelop form in the insinuating caress of a Venetian atmosphere thicker and more unctuous than that which Titian had seen. With his masses of white foam, his swan down, and his spongy but yet firm flesh, over which he would draw a veil, as though he were ashamed of his desire and repented of having loved the flesh so well; and so the ambiguous quality in his work is accentuated and something unhealthy floats about his figures. He is perverse in his melancholy, in his desire for a chastity which he cannot attain—a great artist gone astray and lying to himself. His luscious modeling melts into a warm and transparent shadow, and it has so little frankness that its passages become subtle to the point of disappearance. With Caravaggio, who desires to react, and who does react at times with vigor against the invasion of affectation and insipidity, the shadows become, on the contrary, perfectly opaque, and objects start out from them in a violent relief which obtains the desired effect, but under which scarcely anything remains. Factitious suavity or simulated strength: imposture is everywhere. With the honeyed painting of Barroccio, the soul of Michael Angelo Buonarroti descends to the work of the confessional.

Bologna, the paradoxical city of the leaning towers, the city of megalomania and of monuments which, situated midway between Florence and Venice, seemed to stand condemned to disguise under its pretentious elo-

MICHAEL ANGELO. Night, detail. (*Medici Tomb, Florence.*)

quence, the genius of both places—Bologna tried to arrest the fall. It only hastened it by reducing painting to laboratory processes in which the formulas of Titian, of Michael Angelo, of Raphael, and of Correggio were cunningly combined. For a long time the learned city had aspired to this rôle: Francia had tried to soften the impoverished style of the painters of Ferrara, which Cosimo Tura, Ercole Roberti, and Francesco Cossa had forged under the double influence of the Umbrian and the Paduan masters, and which Lorenzo Costa had brought to Bologna—turning now in the direction of Venice, now in the direction of Umbria.

The spectacle that we now witness is the contrary of the one presented by the decadence of Greece, during which sources of life could be opened up here and there in new countries because the original organism, having developed more slowly and more universally, broke up with less rapidity; but in Italy there was no arresting the descent. The School, step by step, becomes a mere factory. Its principal founder at Bologna, Annibale Carracci, was still, if not a great painter, at least a man of noble will, of grave mind, and of conscience. He adapted intelligently the inventions of others, and ornamented the great melancholy palaces of the Italian princes who had now lost their independence. In his hollow but severely arranged pictures, the pagan divinities bend under his wealth of rhetoric. With Domenichino, the drama becomes completely external, the gestures break up and disperse the overstrained composition, and the mimicry turns into grimacing, though sometimes in a bare arm or in a bit of sky there vibrates the ethereal soul of Venice. The genuine grace of Albani is so sugary and sophisticated that one has difficulty in doing it justice. The bombast of Guido Reni

and of Guercino is well-nigh intolerable. What with false sentiment, icy and waxen color, the organization of the picture prescribed by recipe and conventional drawing, the discord that reigns in the art factory of fallen Italy becomes more and more accentuated and develops that gesticulating character which, in the seventeenth century, will culminate in the disjointed and indefatigable grandiloquence of Bernini.

With the contortions of his statues, with the battles and the romantic landscapes of Salvator Rosa, with the dregs of painting that we reach with the prestidigitation of Luca Giordano, the easy and questionable life of Naples invaded Italy and merged its troubled waters with the exhausted currents of the north. It contributed, at least, as much as was necessary to the Jesuit propaganda to mislead the tragic and passionate soul of Italy toward that baroque style in which passion turned to intrigue and tragedy to melodrama. We cannot deny that the style was lacking in abundance and in brilliancy. It had too much. Something of a Hindu exuberance puffed up the buildings and the pictures, and gave to the statues their convulsive appearance. But, within, there was none of the burning sap of India. Instead, there is a heavy look of vanity that inflates the forms with a desire to look well, to please, and to astonish. Under the dominion of bigoted and corrupt political organizations, the great Italian cities, from the sixteenth century onward, pay homage to their own wealth in extravagant churches, amiable and gilded, and in palaces ornamented, like the churches, with profuse decoration. Excepting Venice, where the atmosphere saves everything, this passion for building, for decorating, and for dazzling gave to certain of the cities, to Genoa, to Bologna, and especially to Rome,

BERNARDINO LUINI. The Gathering of the Manna, fresco. (*Brera, Milan.*)

a character of obstinate power which approaches a kind of beauty; Genoa, however, is insolent, and Bologna pretentious. Rome, with her ruins overgrown with verdure, her red palaces whose reflection turns the fountains to blood, her enormous volumes of water—Rome haunts our memory with a monotonous heaviness. Through twenty centuries she has remained what she was, the place where nature, more than anywhere

Bernardino Luini. The Bath of the Nymphs. (*Brera, Milan.*)

else in the world, has consented, with unwearying indifference, to take on the form of the will. Besides, in the eighteenth century, she, like Venice, has a moment of semiawakening and lifts her stone shell to permit the entrance among her ruins of beautiful and princely villas surrounded by parks rich in sentiment. We cannot be sure as to the explanation of this, but it doubtless lies in the philosophic revolt that was taking place everywhere. Piranesi constructs his great staircases and dreams his terrible prisons; it is the last, deep sigh of Michael Angelo, a fantastic gleam in the shadow, the tragic spirit of Italy stifling under the crumbling walls and hidden behind the cellar bars, the violent and

mysterious bound of her great heart which cannot be stilled. Rome is strange. Ugly when one comes to analyze it, the city preserves in its ensemble an artificial splendor which is garbed in living splendor by the people and the gardens.

In Italy, in England, and in France, as in the Orient, the garden is the only artistic expression that belongs

The Villa d'Este.

to the aristocracies. It adapts itself to the most imperious needs of those beings who have been robbed of self-possession through idleness and wealth. It throws around them the solitude which they cannot seek within themselves. It is made to surround them with murmurs, with coolness and shade, the possession of which, amid the freedom of the earth, is the recompense of the poor. Even when it is amassed, shaped, and broken in, nature is never ugly. The trees remain the trees; the water remains the water; the flowers remain the flowers; and whatever artist arranges them, space and light retain the power of softening the contrasts, of organizing the values, and of orchestrating the colors.

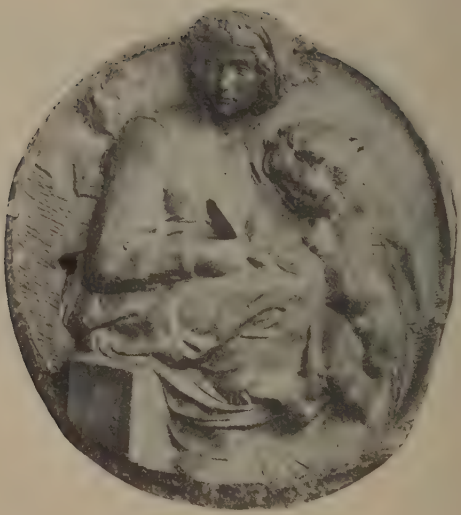
The villas of the Roman princes have a tragic majesty. The terraces rise by stages toward the rectangular palaces; the somber vegetation which covers them fills the air with bitter perfumes and outlines the tall shadows in the basins of water almost black. The

Correggio. Detail of the Vault of the Convent of St. Paul, fresco.

waters there are almost motionless under the cypresses that shoot upward; and the marble steps descend from circular balustrades that are green with moss. The silence of the lawns under the umbrella-shaped pines gives a funereal note to the prearranged order of the gardens. One thinks of death, of absolute forgetfulness.

And so the gardens of the villas surrounding Rome can provide the city with a mortuary crown of boxwood

and laurel. Her decline begins on the day when the duels between the great monarchies are staged. And the moral force which the Papacy lent to her, being no longer the expression of the crowd, survives only as an appearance. In reality, Rome's collapse began when Italy, crying out in her pain, gave birth to what was called the modern spirit, which extends even to the new intuitions which press upon us to-day. For da Vinci, the unknown never ceases to retreat before us, and we shall know nothing of the reality of things. For Michael Angelo, we shall continue to suffer until we have seized a moment of harmony, and when that moment has passed our pain will return. Raphael offers us the example of one of those fugitive and immortal victories. Italy, through these three minds, has freed humanity from dogma, has authorized all the audacities of investigation and thought, has reconciled in a possible unity all the currents of idealism, and has freed from its bonds the form which expresses it.



MICHAEL ANGELO.

A Canal in Venice

Chapter III. VENICE

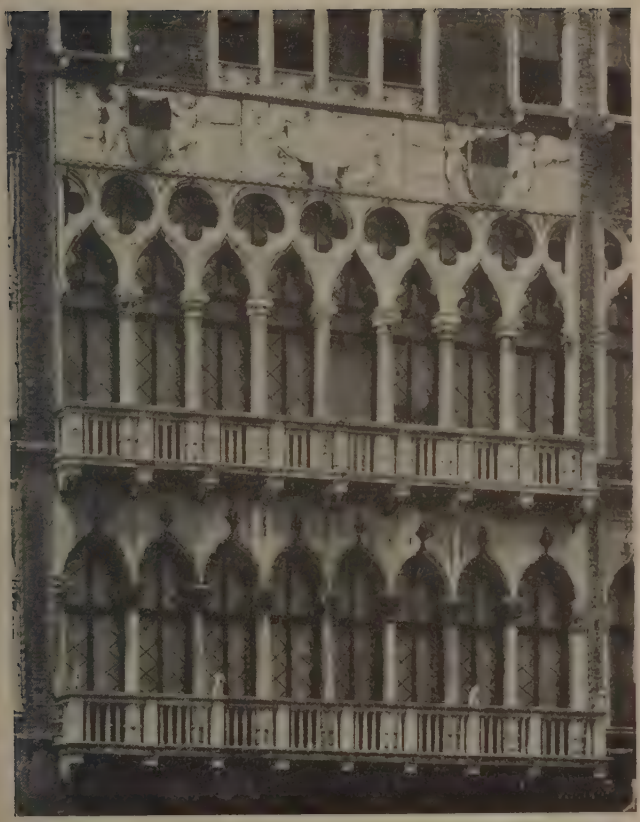
I

THE foreign wars of the city are almost constant, but at a distance; there are no civil wars, a sheltered position affording protection against invasion by sea or land makes possible a continuous development; ten centuries of independence are acquired by fortunate struggle and by easy and living effort this, even more than the water and the sky, is what gives Venice her original character in the midst of an Italy who becomes herself only in moments of crisis, torn by revolutions and mutilated by conquests. Venice seems to be unaware of the fever and the anguish of her search; she gropes but little in order to find her path, travels along it steadily with the wind or against it, slackens her pace to gather up the magnificent fruits

that are offered her, enjoys their pulp, becomes intoxicated, and falls asleep to the sound of music, among the fading garlands, the dying flowers, and the lights which the daylight pales in the depths of the old ruined palaces. It is Greece reborn, nude once more, grown heavier, laden with golden grapes, and seen against a background of sleeping forests and stormy twilights. One would say that Venice prolonged the effort of antiquity only that she might affirm—despite her retreats, her necessary reactions, and the apparent contradictions of the world which surrounded her—the continuity of human effort, and to transmit to the modern mind, with the fruits which she holds out to it so ripe that they open by themselves, the seed of constantly recurring harvests.

She herself had found this seed amid the rotten pulp which was fermenting at the foot of the tree of Byzantium. For five centuries her sailors drained Hellenized Asia in order that the mounting life of young Italy might assimilate the ancient spirit of voluptuousness, of magnificence, and of death. The roots of Venice go deep into the red shadow of Saint Mark's, under the cupolas of burnt gold where the incense has an odor like that of rotting grain and blood.

This city of merchants mingled, in its lively activity, Italian passion with the corruption of the later empire, the tainted Christianity of the Orient with the barbaric Christianity of the Occident, the spirituality of Islam with the paganism of Greece; and from all this it made, with the sustained sweep of its indefatigable energy, something as personal as its own life hanging between air and water, something as victorious as the warfare which it carried on upon every sea to affirm and maintain its dominion. And so it arrived at its profound,



Palazzo Foscari (14th Century). The façade, detail.

imperious, and unchallengeable harmony, accumulating without choice or taste, subject to the chance of defeat and caprice, all the scattered elements whose cohesion and agreement are, as a rule, necessary for the attainment of harmony. Before it had ripened in the soul of Titian, the harmony of Venice, imposing itself like a natural force, had arisen spontaneously in the current of an overwhelming force which unconsciously made use of the vapor of the water and the light to mingle sea and sky, thereby attenuating contrasts and sweeping unrelated colors into a single movement.

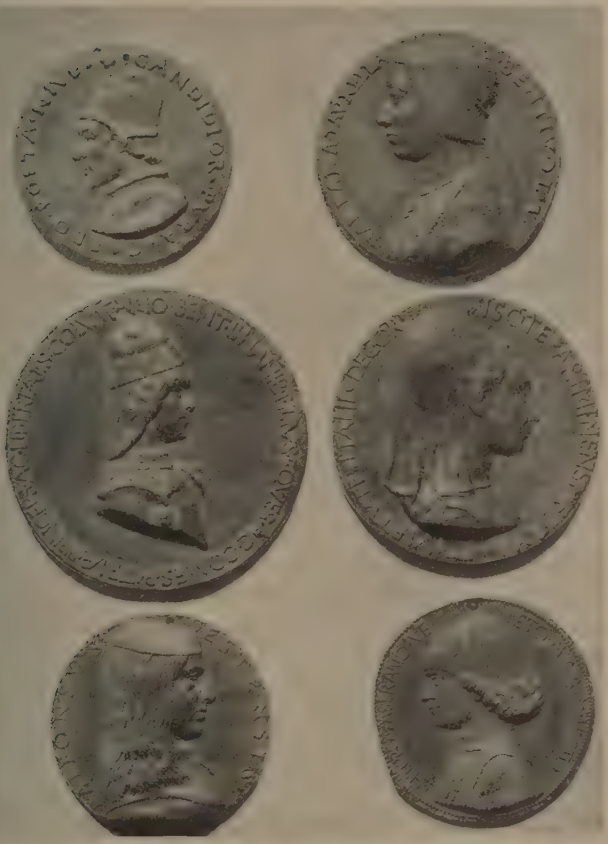
Only parvenus, who succeed in everything, who have the fire of audacity and the habit of victory, could pile up in this manner centuries and styles one upon another, decorate the gates of a church with nude women, set up a Roman quadriga above the golden cupolas which they brought back from Byzantium, perch diminutive lions upon columns too tall for them, and build palaces whose base is on top. Bad taste displayed with such insolence ends by creating a kind of elementary and fatal beauty, like a forest in which the roughest and most delicate forms are mingled, like a crowd in which the brutality of primitive instincts is blended with the refinement of the spirit and the purest impulses of the heart. Venice tempered her strength and her grace in a kind of tide of intoxicated and troubled matter, like a world in which, from the womb of tropical nature, there should arise alcazars and mosques, Hindu temples, parthenons, and cathedrals.

In this atmosphere of an Oriental tale, amid the sound of festivals, of the flapping of the flags, of the reviews of the ships with the purple sails, and of the tremendous hum of the docks where three thousand

PISANELLO. Drawing from the Valardi Album. (*Louvre.*)

ships poured the whole of the Orient into the motley crowd, there was born spontaneously an order full of the energy of Venice, at the moment when this wonderful hearth, absorbing the warmth of distant lands, sent it back to its sources across the sea, and spread it over the Occident. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Europe was torn by the anarchy of feudalism, by the effort of the communes to retain their life, and by the first attempt at monarchical unity. Venice alone, at the peak of its development, enjoyed absolute peace within itself; its people were happy under the iron rule of its commercial nobility which, save in political matters, allowed them complete liberty and gorged them with the wealth that its terrible policy of protectionism was accumulating within the city, at the risk of stifling it. Venice witnessed the fusion of the ideas which its traders and sailors brought to it amid the tumult in the wake of their ships. The Moslem world and the Christian world, the two hostile forces which for three centuries had been contending for the mastery of the Mediterranean, found in Venice the only territory where they could meet without fighting—a strange, fairylike, and spontaneous harmony in which Moorish form and Gothic form harmonized without effort. As in all other places, the rise of architecture preceded the rise of plastics and of literature. Everywhere else, it was coincident with the great moment of the collective energy of the people, who first construct the dwellings which, later on, will be supplied by the energy of liberated individuals.

But, as everywhere in Italy, the temple does not respond to the desire of the city. Here it is the palaces of the merchants which interpret that desire. Wealth did not destroy the expression of popular enthusiasm,



PISANELLO. Medals. (*Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.*)

because wealth could not be maintained and increased except by indefatigably opposing to the brutality of the peoples a physical and moral force; because all the lower organisms of the isolated, unique city were perpetuated in its achievements; because wealth was coincident with the awakening and the burst of Italian passion. Since the death of the world of antiquity and after the time of the cathedral, our most powerful symphony of stone is there. It unrolls all along the Grand Canal or at the edge of the solitary *rios* where, in the evening, the lanterns pour into the waters of the night their narrow pools of blood; it is in the façades of red and gold and verdigris, whose frescoes are corroded with salt, and above which, over the moldy flight of steps, tiers of colonnettes sprang out of the openwork of the balconies, to join, at the peak of the ogival windows, with the trefoils and the embellishments of the flowers above. In these moments of tremendous vitality the unity which is inherent in man dictates his gestures and ripens his thoughts; between this mingling of water and sky, amid this feverish world in which languages, religions, manners, dress, and blood merge, everything is permitted. Instead of suspending the lacework of the colonnades in space, old Giovanni Buon will compel it to come forth from the pavement and will, without crushing it, understand how to place upon it an enormous cube of pink stone open only in a few places and bristling with thorns. The architectural paradox is swept away in the triumphal movement of life and conquest. The fantastic palaces emerge from the shadowy water like an Oriental night in which story-tellers, on the terraces, evoke the confused piles of milky bulbs and shafts of enamel that sleep in the moonlight. The long campaniles which launch upward remind one of

minarets. Here, without imprudence, one can load the ceilings of Gothic palaces with gold. The domes, which are to come from Rome, gaze without astonishment upon the cupolas from the Bosphorus. And the three rows of ancient columns, superimposed and framing the arched windows, above which lie nude statues, alternate, without offending the eye, from one façade to another, with slender rows of Arab or French colonnettes. As she will do with the painters, Venice drags into the vertigo of her glory and her sensuality all the architects who come to her from the Continent, from Verona, from Vicenza, from Ferrara, from Florence herself, so different from Venice that the influences of the two cities, seen in their ensemble and from a distance, appear antagonistic. Fra Giocondo, the Lombardis, Sanmicheli, Sansovino, and Andrea Palladio are transformed in Venice or even discover themselves there, and the architecture of the Italian Renaissance finds in the city a favorable ground for the development of the severe force which sometimes redeems its lack of logic and its decorative fantasies. The procession of palaces swings about with the waters, the narrow canals open and lose themselves amid the inclined houses which bathe their reflections in the dark pools; Chinese bridges outline their mass like that of an ass's back against perspectives of dappled and rippling water, of which one gets a momentary glimpse and loses sight the moment after. The harmony is maintained everywhere: it has developed from a single ideal of unrestrained abundance, from a single effort to dominate Oriental lands and seas, from a single history of victories, and from a single resplendent line of radiances and reflections that proceeds from the waves to the clouds after having so penetrated the stones that they

have its own color of seaweed steeped in azure and in fire.

II

It is thanks to the unity of the Venetian symphony in which the stone, the atmosphere, and the water, the life of the people and of the princes, and commerce and history so spontaneously unite their multiple relationships in so narrow a space, and in surroundings so dense that great painting appeared in Venice almost mature from the very first, without offering the spectacle of the feverish struggle between memories and presentiments in which Florence had consumed her genius. Within fifty years it forged one of the most trustworthy weapons to meet the demands of the world in quest of new rhythms. It granted to material nature and our need for pleasure the dignity of immortal elements. Her sensual idealism burst forth with such force that it came quickly to its realization, and died as quickly from its own excesses. Venetian painting had scarcely any primitives.

Or rather, it was outside of Venice that her painters went to seek initiation. If we except the ill-determined but certain contribution of Jacopo d'Avanzo and of Altichieri, the old Veronese decorators who were contemporary with the last Gothic artists of Florence, it was Siena above all, the school of mysticism, who through Gentile da Fabriano kindled the fire on the hearth of Venice, which was nevertheless destined to devour the last vestige of mysticism in Italy. Gentile, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, had worked in Venice as well as in Rome, with Pisanello, the Veronese. The latter derived from Florence where Andrea del Castagno had taught him painting. He

PISANELLO. Portrait of Lionello d'Este. (*Accademia Carrara, Bergamo.*)

retained the sharp affirmation of the Tuscans, their spirit of decision, and the accent which is necessary to cut into the metal with a firm line of the medalist. Not since the days of the Syracusans had there been seen this firmness of casting, this savory and delicate modeling, this penetrating and vigorous elegance of expression. The innumerable sketches with which he filled his sketch books, when the ships at the Piazetta discharged the exotic animals, the multicolored birds, the butterflies, and the unknown insects, rendered his hand supple for engraving. Almost Japanese in his grasp of the peculiarities of the animals, almost German in his sustained power of detail and in the somewhat linear quality of his material—like Mantegna, like da Vinci, and like so many other painters of northern Italy toward which Germany, through her merchants and her soldiers, had been descending continually for ten centuries—he saw Venice with Gentile, even before the Venetians did. Both artists came from the western slope, with minds almost mature. Both of them adored the processions, the trailing robes, the gold chains, the hats, the turbans, the furred cloaks, the magnificent confusion of peoples, and the wild maelstrom of the crowds in action. In return, it was through them that Italy, with Pinturricchio and with Gozzoli, accepted the picturesque invasion of the sailors and of the Orient and carried the first elements of romanticism into the Shakespearean cycle.

Jacopo Bellini, the true initiator of Venetian painting, had, moreover, come to know through others beside Pisanello the vigor of the old Tuscans. After Giotto, before Paolo Uccello and Filippo Lippi, Donatello had spent a long period at Padua, at the gates of Venice, where he had impressed all the local artists. Padua,

celebrated from the beginning of the thirteenth century, was another Florence, almost as rich in activity and in influence, but of a less literary character; more realistic, more scientific, to use the word which would later have been applied. Almost all the young painters of northern Italy—notably those strange Ferrarese, Cosimo Tura,

School of Ferrara. Fresco of the Schifanoia Palace, detail. (*Ferrara.*)

Ercole Roberti, Francesco Cossa especially, and Mantegna rougher and wilder, as poor and ragged as a wolf —went through, in the middle of the fifteenth century, the atelier of Squarcione of Padua, a great collector of ancient sculptures, who had traveled in Italy and, what was rarer at that time, in Greece. Padua, far more than Florence, submitted to the true influence of antiquity, toward which she was more directly led by the neighboring city of Venice, with its constant rela-

tionship with the Greek world and its merely nominal Christianity.

If the genius of Mantegna was able to resist the dangerous influence of a culture too strong to be accepted in his time, it was because the time burned with an incomparable flame. It was also because he found in the needs of his race the generalizing spirit evoked in the ancient times. He was perhaps the only man in Italy to draw direct and permanent inspiration from the marbles brought from Greece or discovered in the ground. Passionately he studied the collections of Squarcione; he did collecting himself and longed to go to Rome to see what remained of the crumbling walls and the buried temples. And it was through him that the soul of antiquity participated most substantially in building up the skeleton of a world which was obstinately seeking the sources of an old ideal. But happily his expressive vigor overpowered his erudition. The eye does not stop with the folds of the togas, the chariots, the acanthuses of the colonnades, the legends, the palms, the candelabra, the laurels, the crowns of consular pomp, and the external attributes of the triumphal processions which his learning enabled him to reconstitute for Italy, and the loss of which she had regretted. Though he was haunted by his care for historical accuracy and for local picturesqueness, though he was pursued by the memory of the Roman bas-reliefs hollowed out in the sarcophagi, the tense force of his lyricism overcomes all things and carries them away. An implacable will power casts the sculptural groups in a metallic mold from which the hard sound of the new universe escapes in spite of him. It is in vain that he restrains, presses down, and disciplines the life that rises within him: it makes the armor crack; it

School of Ferrara. Fresco of the Schifanoia Palace, detail.
(*Ferrara.*)

swells the breasts, the arms, and the legs of the women it bursts forth into the light and into the deep blu sky all sown with white clouds. It vibrates in th arrows which the pitiless bowmen shoot at Sain Sebastian. A strange artist, who tried to drink at ever

GENTILE BELLINI. The Miracle of the Holy Cross.
(*Accademia, Venice.*)

dried-up spring and who, finding only dead stones there, still knew how to animate them with that kind of intellectual frenzy in which a world eager for knowledge could console itself for its loss of feeling. This Latin sap, this noble Greek idealism which all his life he thought he owed to the works he studied so long and so closely, was already tormenting his race in the military statues and the meditative children of Donatello. He loved, without having been taught, the nude youth, the women who dance in a round with an animal

MANTEGNA. Calvary, detail. (*Louvre.*)

grace, the thick garlands of verdure stifling the fruits, the great precious landscapes that seem to be engraved with the edge of a diamond, the lofty architectures, the old Italian cities chiseled on the hills from which thin trees arise, the roads, and the carefully tilled farms seen through the transparence of the morning. That reserve so difficult of approach, that vigorous elegance, that great virile drawing of a man accustomed to attacking the copper plate, that geometrical order in the scattered groups, those gestures whose sureness made them solemn and hieratic, almost funereal, like a farewell to dead ages—all that belongs to him. In it Piero della Francesca alone might have pointed out the indelible trace of his own thought, and Italy's impetuous spring toward her tragic possession of the definitive form beyond which Michael Angelo was to find a gaping abyss of nothingness. Andrea Mantegna is so sure of approaching absolute realities by means of his hard

THE MADONNA AND CHILD.
(*Louvre.*)

MANTEGNA. Saint Sebastian, detail. (*Louvre.*)

roads that, to give rhythm to his stride, he plays upon a harp of iron.

A mind of such vigor necessarily exerts upon the leading men, who are beginning to be tortured by the soul of Venice, an influence all the more lively that his mind differs from theirs. Mantegna was the bone structure which the gorgeous city covered with flesh and skin and over which she spread the splendor of her scenery and the glory of her sky. The painting of Crivelli, who was also trained by Squarcione, sad painting, as withered as dead wood, possesses really nothing which could lead one to suspect the approach of that vibration of living matter in which Giorgione, thirty years later, will see the birth of a new world. But Jacopo Bellini, who loved Mantegna enough to give him his daughter, has already seen the Venetian purple trembling in the dark basilica where the smoke of the candles rises like a vapor of blood. The double influence of his master Gentile da Fabriano and of his son-in-law Mantegna will affirm itself in his two sons through attaining, in the following generation, a harmony at the moment of maturity.

Giovanni Bellini started out from Mantegna, to cover the distance that leads to Giorgione. He lived ninety years and, in the course of even his life, witnessed the great dramatic movement which was to permit the painters of Venice to reject Platonist rationalism and to recover, at the end of their longing, the Dionysian spirit of the ancient world, dulled by a thousand years of repressed desires, weighed down by the deep voluptuousness and by the optimism resulting from sensuality, which it had voluntarily accepted. The dryness and the severity of the master of Mantua were to be absorbed little by little into his maturing sensibility as

the century advanced. He was the permanent witness and the principal actor in the decisive effort in which Venice discovered herself. While the Florentines were searching frantically for expressive line and for anatomical modeling, he had already discovered the secret of

MANTEGNA. The Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian, detail. (*Louvre.*)

living modeling, and of the great simplified surfaces which give to bodies their fullness, their posture, and their weight. To be sure, they did not yet quiver under those waves of blood which cause their flesh to beat when they stretch out in the shade of the trees before Giorgione or Titian. Certain traces of primitive asceticism reveal their skeleton, dry up their skin, and tighten their faces from which suffering has not quite departed. But all of them, especially the Madonna and Child, are arrayed in those reds and those blues envel-

oped in gold which will be remembered by the painters to come; a tranquillity of soul causes them to forget the outraged mothers, the time of misery and massacres, and the dignity which obtains when we freely accept the functions of nature and attend to their performance without compunction. Toward the end of his life, the true light and the sky of Venice and sometimes the great forests which Titian will love enter into his pictures, and the somewhat cut-up landscapes of his earlier period begin to have mellower lines, to grow gentler, and to breathe deeply. He gets a glimpse of the sea. He perceives the vibration of the world. He has almost completely shifted the scene of the drama and given over to space the form which, until then, had been a semiprisoner of the moral sentiment. He is the first to define the thing which lays the very foundation of the nature of Venice—its universal sensualism.

It rested, moreover, with the two sons of Jacopo to supply the great Venetians with the elements of the poem. Giovanni sought the expansion of the form in the currents that originate at its center and that carry it outward. Gentile himself brought to Venice the whole exterior of the earth, the sky, the foreigners, the Orient of which he had caught a glimpse and had felt deeply during a triumphal journey to Constantinople. While the Vivarini of Murano, hard and virile painters of the military age, were already watching the silken banners floating over the magnificent processions, Gentile was observing Venice from nearer by, its painted façades, its pink and green houses, its heavy canals, the carpets hung from the balconies, San Marco resplendent with gold and the solemn processions where the pure blacks were luminous alongside of the brilliant reds. There was scarcely any atmosphere as yet, but

GIOVANNI BELLINI. Venice, the Mistress of the World.
(*Accademia, Venice.*)

instead an almost uniform ashy blondness. Lazzaro Sebastiani will not introduce his warm and golden harmonies until a little later. It is as if a crowd were already richly bedecked, but motionless and symmetrical, and as if waiting for some one to give it life. It was imperative that the most poetic imagination in the history of painting—perhaps with that of Gozzoli—summarize the work which ranges step by step from Gentile da Fabriano to Gentile Bellini in order to give its scope to that romantic Orientalism in which Shakespeare will gather up the inexhaustible, impetuous, and moving material that flows with the torrent of his dramas. When Vittore Carpaccio had traversed the world, there was in the cradle of Venetian thought something else besides flesh, space, and color; death, love, voluptuousness, and the extraordinary vividness of a dream had suddenly come in with the legend and with life. A fairy vision floated in the flags, the sound of pearls and of gold, of hope, and of memory. Painting was free to transpose all the victories over desire and illusion into their absolute harmonies.

When one confronts the work of Carpaccio with that of the two Bellinis, one seems to see a rough drawing of the powerful trinity through whom the glory of Venice has stretched across time. Giovanni, Gentile, and Carpaccio are Titian, Veronese, and Tintoretto: a Titian less fully developed, less in harmony with all the elements of life which he encompasses symphonically: a more timid Veronese who distributed with far less luxuriance all the fabulous treasures of the seas amassed by four or five centuries of commerce and victories; a Tintoretto less stormy, less tragic, but one who is quite as impassioned and so free in his rapture, so abundant and fresh that, beside him, the soul of the great dramatist

of painting seems troubled and as dangerous as a poisoned river.

Like the good primitive that he still was, Carpaccio told all that he knew in each one of his canvases. It is true that he knew much. One may love him for his

GIOVANNI BELLINI. Jesus Receives the Chalice.
(*National Gallery.*)

anecdotes, for he is a wonderful story-teller. But the anecdote, always transfigured and magnified, always a motive for painted decorations and transpositions, is lost in the poetic sentiment which lifts up and frees everything. The sea is covered with boats and with ships. The city is as exact and new as that which Bellini paints, but more somber harmonies announce its maturity. Through their high arcades, the palaces permit us to see masts with pennants flying from them, the multicolored pavements of the great docks where merchants and promenaders come and go before the vessels at anchor. We see also leprous houses, dirty

clothes hung from one façade to the other across the plague-ridden canals, and the incredible swarm of beggars, boatmen, jugglers, and ruffians. There are people everywhere: in the streets, on the staircases, on the bridges, and on the terraces. Lords and ladies file by, people are chatting, people are parading, people bend

GIOVANNI BELLINI. Portraits. (*Berlin Museum.*)

the knee before princes who receive in the open air. Palm trees grow in solitary squares, an unexpected camel is seen outlined at the corner of a dock, and the lion of Saint Jerome actually treads the pavement of the Piazetta dragged along by a black lion-tamer around whom the street boys dance gayly. Carpaccio mingles with the crowd, he listens, he gossips, he is out of doors all day long. The violins and the brass instruments of the showmen creak and snore; the showman's nasal patter excites jest and laughter. The good

painter is in the very first rank. Everything amuses him, but if one keeps one's eye upon him one sees why his face becomes serious at times. In some corner he has seen a strange isolated figure which holds his attention: a sick man, an old woman, a sorcerer, a monkey dressed up, or a buffoon, and at once the problem of destiny is before him, with the ugliness or the evil or the sneering of the devil at the turn of the flowery road. . . . He becomes pensive and turns aside, the sound of the music dies away. The women whose faces are too heavily painted, with heavy mops of dyed hair, signal to him from a balcony. He goes up. And here he is in the company of filthy little dogs, obscene monkeys, and cooing doves, and is confused by the thick perfumes and the shining eyes. He yields, he is sick at heart, he is sad, he wanders aimlessly. From the streets he peers to the recesses of solitary rooms. And here he finds peace. When he sees little girls sleeping in their little bed, he visits them with the fairies and goes away on tiptoe after having placed a pretty bouquet on the table. He has already resumed his

CRIVELLI. Coronation of the Virgin. (*Brera, Milan.*)

place in the processions and the festivals, amid the bishops dressed in red and gold. He knows that the blasts of the trumpet will bring forth people from the houses, and spectators to lean from the windows, and he knows that the spectacle is all for him. Then he sails with the ships. To all the far corners of the earth he follows the good Christian knights who go forth to fight the dragon. History, legend still heavy with troubled Gothic poetry, life invariably unforeseen, the dream which is sometimes of blood, all these things clash together in throngs—precise, almost devoid of gesture, but carried along by a decorative and dramatic sentiment into a lyricism of color from which the soul of Venice blazes forth with such ingenuous pride that neither Titian nor Tintoretto nor Veronese will be any the less sensible of it when they come to express it with their greater means. A charming spirit, very Italian, very Oriental, a trifle barbarous, a trifle mad, who feels coursing through him a breath of freedom that brings with it in a hundred thousand scattered images the marvelous echo of the great voyages which are beginning, the presentiment of the islands of perfume, the forests filled with golden birds, the unknown tribes, and the new constellations. The blues, almost black, of the dead water, the forest of red banners, the reds and the greens which are wedded by a glaze of golds, the fanfare of the skies, the seas, the buildings, the great lace robes, the blues, the greens, the blacks with their deep and sustained accompaniment of the reds burst forth in dull sonorous tones which seem to echo in the trumpets of the heralds.

III

The last of the Bellinis was finishing his long labor of technical preparation and of the maturing of the

senses, and Carpaccio was collecting, in a burst of intense rapture, all the decorative and picturesque elements upon which the great painters will draw for almost a century, at the moment when Venetian power was shaken by the fall of Constantinople, which closed the Orient to her, and by the maritime discoveries which gave to the world a new center of commerce. The city then recoiled upon herself to reach her depths through the soul of her artists. Venice was like a being overflowing with strength and health whose need to organize life against the incessant assaults of difficult surroundings and of semibarbarous peoples had left no time to indulge in pleasure. Once the city had tasted of pleasure, she yielded herself without restraint; she gave herself over to the desires and the energy of which her senses had accumulated so rich a store. She died of it, like those animals so bursting with life that they die in the act of reproduction. Her death transmitted to the future, in inner wealth, the outward opulence which she had amassed for six centuries.

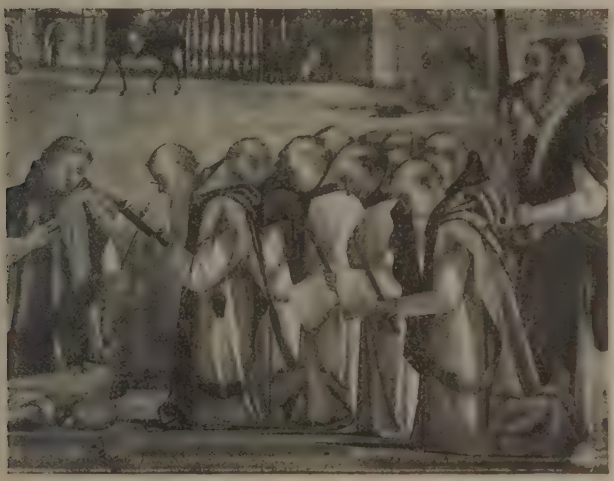
Giorgione, Palma, Lorenzo Lotto, Bonifazio, Basaiti, Pordenone, Sebastiano del Piombo, and Titian, all pupils or disciples of Giovanni, arrived together to pluck the fruits which were bending down the branches, and at the same time to celebrate, in a frenzy of painting never attained before, the rehabilitation of material nature, to which man is invariably forced to return when he has been wandering for too long a time in the beautiful desert of the pure idea; to celebrate also the death struggle and apotheosis of that sensuality of which the ancient world had bequeathed the legend. From that time on, like products of the earth, overflowing pellmell from baskets filled to overflowing, and spreading over the roads to the rhythm of the step of

those who carry them, the pictures and frescoes are scattered in the palaces, on the walls, in the churches quite as much and even more than in other places—telling the story of the festivals, fêtes, dances, concerts in great miraculous settings, the depths of the skies, the forests, the springs, the nude flesh quivering with warmth as it awaits the passage of love.

CARPACCIO. Courtesans on a Balcony. (*Museo Civico, Venice.*)

The unity of sentiment, of action, of surroundings, and of life was such that one among the painters of this time may define almost all of them. Titian contains the whole of Venice, from the Bellinis to Veronese and even to Tiepolo. But Titian is more than sketched in Giorgione, born the same year with him and dying two thirds of a century before him; and if the pious and gentle and discreet Lorenzo Lotto, who, before Veronese, saw the fine ash of Venice raining upon his color, has gathered up only certain surface reflections from the greatest painters, Palma and Sebastiano del Piombo. Basaiti and Bonifazio himself, and even the severe

Pordenone who was officially his rival, all resemble Titian. They all have, in a less ample and less personal way, the larger part of his profound quality. Moreover, they had no hesitation about borrowing ideas and images. They lived by continuous exchanging, like the



CARPACCIO. Death of St. Jerome, detail. (*San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, Venice.*)

population and the atmosphere of their city. It is in times of national anæmia that the artists resort to economies. When life has this exuberance, it takes no note of its borrowing. The creeping vines of tropical forests do not prevent the trees about whose branches they entangle themselves from growing tall and wide. Among all the contemporaries of Titian, we find the same abundance, the same compelling and peaceful power of transposing the elements of the universe into

a new order, generalizing and lyrical, and of bathing life and the space in which it moves in the golden amber of the background, from which there arises a red vapor.

The "Concert Champêtre" marks the decisive moment of the great painting; it is the point of departure for Titian. The symphony is born and wells up suddenly; its waves seek and penetrate one another; all the blood of Venice is concentrated in a single heart, a warm heart, regular and calm, which sends forth life with the admirable power of him who is master of himself. A world which is to die, for the first time and with all its means affirms the immortality of desire, of music, and of the intelligence, by associating them with unchanging nature, which offers itself up for their justification. The powers of fecundation retire into themselves and wait in the depths for the moment of full maturity. With Giorgione, the autumn of Venice begins, a heavy splendor, the sonorousness of the seasons when the fruits seem to concentrate the flame and heat of the sun, when their translucent purple barely arrests the light, when the evening is copper-colored, when the women, glowing under their first caresses and heavy in their first maternity, adorn their flesh with great necklaces of amber. Their skin is golden and almost somber, as if the blood that flushes it had received through it a kiss from each one of the burning days which have dawned since the world learned the meaning of pleasure. And yet, in the heart of the deep landscape where they lie, the blue landscape sinking in the distance, their bodies take on a royal splendor like a living sun which spreads over the russet cottages and over the noble groups of trees a glow so warm and so rich that it seems to forbid the winter from returning and the night from falling again. We scarcely know Giorgione, we cannot

CARPACCIO Death of St. Jerome. *(San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, Venice.)*

affirm the authenticity of more than three or four of his works, but we cannot imagine them otherwise than bathed in the atmosphere of a late summer afternoon, when the motionless light is amassed in the stifling shadow, when one would imagine that the wind rose only to make us perceive perfumes which until then had been in material form. Perhaps it was well that he died young, thus giving time to the more severe and patient genius of Titian to gain possession of itself. His painting is as intoxicating as an overheavy wine.

It has been said of this painting, of Titian's above all, of that of Veronese, and of all the painters of Venice, with the exception perhaps of Tintoretto, that it is altogether objective, that it never reveals the opinion of the artist respecting the meaning and the morality of the world. It is a question of words. There is no one among those for whom form is but a means of translating pure ideas, whether he is called Giotto, or da Vinci or Michael Angelo, who is not gifted, in the highest degree, with the sense of living reality and who does not incorporate it with his own substance after having experienced it passionately. There is no one among those for whom form is an end, whether he is called Titian, Rubens, or even Velasquez, who does not discontinue his objectivism the moment that he is finished assembling the elements of his work in order to transpose them all into an imaginary reality which will define his mind. All the languages that we speak, painting as well as the others, symbolize our thought, and whether it accepts or does not accept the world, the world which it expresses will be a living world if our thought is living; our thought will live if the world which expresses it has been penetrated by that thought. Michael Angelo and Titian, though, without doubt,

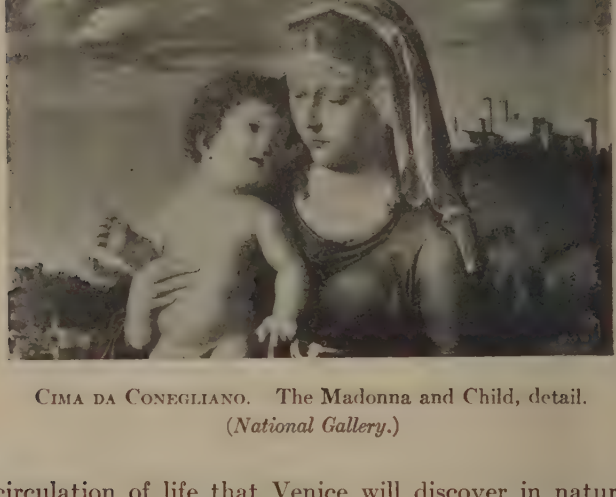
they started from different horizons, meet halfway along their journey.

Titian, in this group of great Venetians at the beginning of the heroic period, is, moreover, through his great compositions, his nudes, his landscapes, and his

CARPACCIO. Saint Triphon, detail. (*San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, Venice.*)

portraits, the one among them all who most frequently returns to Nature in order to concentrate her in the narrow space of a canvas, after having co-ordinated in his will and his desire all the elements of form, color, light, and sentiment, through which she imposes love. Palma Vecchio, who is so magnificent with his big, blond-haired women, abandons himself to the intoxication of painting the colors of flesh and of stuffs; he has not that rhythm, as vast as sensibility and as tense as reason, by means of which Titian presents his thought

to us. Sebastiano del Piombo, who lived for more than thirty years at Rome, is captivated there by the masters of its school. Superb painter he is, with a somber splendor that glows about his dark women with their peaceful eyes, with their large, full bodies, almost animal in character, wherein something of the immense



CIMA DA CONEGLIANO. The Madonna and Child, detail. (*National Gallery.*)

circulation of life that Venice will discover in nature penetrates the thick muscles, the breasts, the backs, the arms, and the legs, as if the sense of volume which Rome gave were too limited to maintain this life and had allowed it to overflow on all sides. But he is dominated by Raphael, to whom, in return, he reveals as much of Venice as Raphael needed in order to make his work a synthesis of Italy, and he is dominated even more by Michael Angelo, whom he will imitate too frequently. Giorgione is dead, Lorenzo Lotto effaces

himself in his discreet melancholy, Pordenone, Basaiti, and Bonifazio remain artists of the second rank. Titian is to fill an entire century, summarize the whole extent and duration of Venice, reveal Tintoretto and Veronese to themselves, dominate Europe through the works which he sends forth behind the armies of Charles the Fifth, define forever the language of painting, project upon the future the shadows of Rubens, Rembrandt, Velasquez, Poussin, Watteau, Delacroix, and the modern landscapists, and justify, by his last works, the audacities of the artists of our time.

IV

Titian has painted universal life. When he listens to its voices, one would say that he was indifferent. They all enter into him with equal rights; the bodies of children, the flesh of women, virile faces, gorgeous or sober costumes, architectures, the earth with its trees and its flowers, the sea, the sky, and all the wandering atoms which make it impossible for the sea and the sky to cease combining their forces. Creative enthusiasm raises him to such a height that his serenity does not desert him even when this entire world, assimilated and recreated in a new order, issues from him in waves continually increasing in length and breadth. He organizes his world into symphonies in which everything that is human resounds in uninterrupted echoes through everything that lives with an instinctive and obscure life, where everything that is material penetrates the human forms and fuses with them for eternity.

In Venice one no longer finds detached edges in the diamond of the atmosphere, there are no more of those imperious lines cutting out the hills and the graded terraces against the sky. There is nothing but the

space in which objects tremble, combine, and become dissociated; a world of reflections, modified, inverted, suppressed, or renewed repeatedly by the hours of the day and by the seasons; it is an animated opal in which the iridescence of the light, seen through watery vapor, forbids the defining of colors and lights and causes the

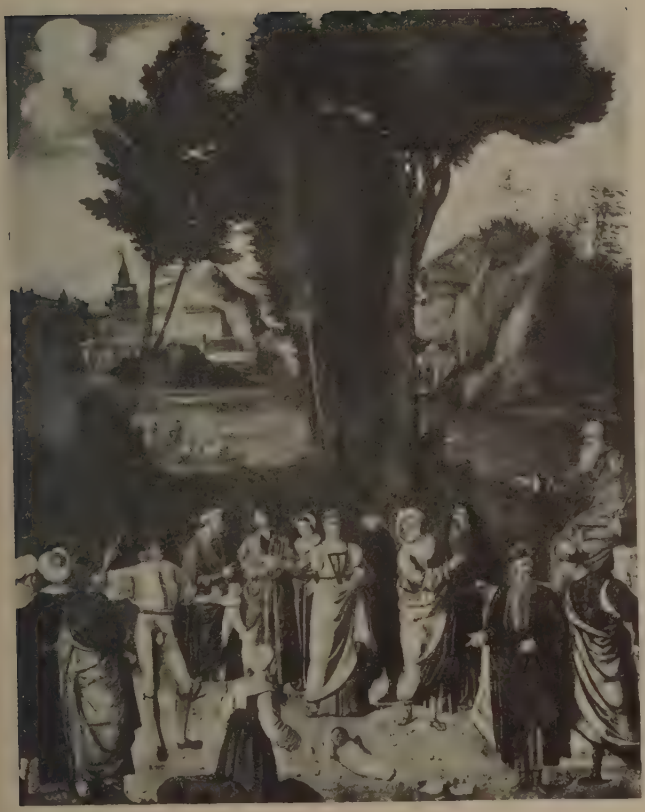
GIORGIONE (?). The Flagellation. (*Church of San Rocco. Venice.*)

very forms to appear like transitory objects which are continually coming forth from matter in movement only to return into it and be merged with it before issuing forth again. On the palaces, red-brown or purple, or covered with a crust of musty gold, all the colors of the prism are awakened, are effaced, come to light again, and prolong themselves as if drawn out in thick strokes, to render obscure the quivering contours

GIORGIONE. The "Concert Champêtre," detail. (*Louvre.*)

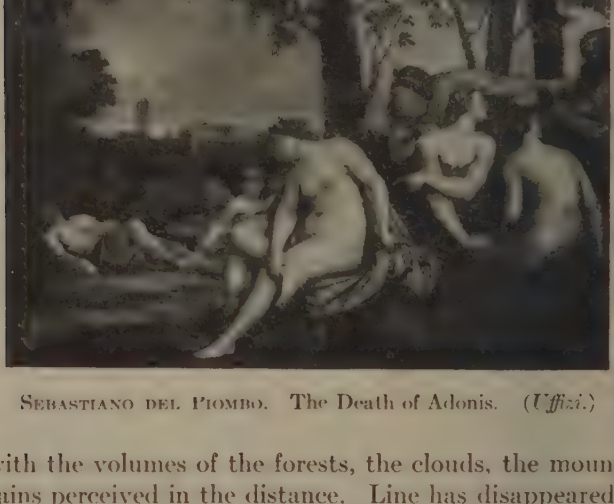
of stones in the dull water in which the fermentation of organic matter caused phosphorescences to roll. The mirror of the sea casts its reflections into the vapors that arise from it under the downpour of light, and when these vapors pass in clouds over the glistening canals, the sky throws back thick shadows upon them and reflects the airy phantom of the waters in which the choppiness of the waves mingles the turquoise and the vermilion, the greens, the golden yellows, the reds, and the oranges of the façades decorated with flags and of the processions of gondolas.

All the painting of Titian is here, and after it all the painting of Venice, and after the painting of Venice all the painting that has life, which sees colors penetrating one another, reflections playing upon surfaces, transparent shadows taking on color—painting in which no tone is ever repeated in the same manner, but dominates by discreetly reminding one of itself, thereby awakening in the eye the vibration of neighboring hues, the luminous life of the world, creating a spontaneous symphony not one beat of which will be born of matter without our being able to discover the cause of it and to seek its effect in the whole of its extent. Doubtless, the discipline gained from the work of Mantegna, later on the influence of Rome, and above all the sensuality which led them necessarily to discover form, the form full and circular which we invariably discover at the conclusion of an investigation into plastics, caused the Venetian painters to see everything gravitating around the volumes which alone are capable of giving us a durable and solid image of the world of our senses. But the Venetians never attained sculptural expression, and Sansovino, their sculptor, who came, however, from Florence, even developed among them a concep-



GIORGIONE (?) The Judgment of Solomon. (*Uffizi.*)

tion of form which, in its shading, vagueness, and grandeur approached that of their painting. Titian always stops at the instant when, at the edges of the mass that turns before him to vanish in the distant plains, he observes the quivering caress of the atmosphere which, by the gradation of its values, unifies the mass



Sebastiano del Piombo. The Death of Adonis. (*Uffizi.*)

with the volumes of the forests, the clouds, the mountains perceived in the distance. Line has disappeared. The spots of color graded down evoke form sufficiently for it to participate in the life of all space. So the continuity which gives life to the work is no longer found in that inner instinct for social solidarity which, for the artists of the Middle Ages, held things together by invisible bonds; neither is it found in the intellectual arabesque which defined this unity for the mind rather than for the senses: it is in the mutual dependence of all the elements of the world, the forms, the lines, the

TITIAN. The Three Graces, detail. (*Galleria Borghese, Rome.*)

colors, and the air that unites them; and if, among the Venetians, the moral sentiment seems to efface itself from life, it is to allow the rise, in an irresistible explosion, of the sensual sentiment of the whole body of nature which Christianity had forgotten. Titian not only prevented the original sin of breaking through the symbolic frontiers within which Michael Angelo had inclosed it once more, but, by bringing about a more perfect unity in the infinite complexity of all the relationships whose logical interweaving makes a harmonious and living universe, he finished the work of Masaccio, completed that of Bellini, consecrated that of Giorgione, and, before Rabelais, before Shakespeare, before Rubens, before Velasquez and Rembrandt, and long before the German musicians, he announced the modern spirit. He created the symphony. He is the father of painting.

The aristocratic nature inherited from his noble ancestors had been tempered by the elementary force of the country where he was born, at the foot of the Tyrolean Alps, among the lakes and the beech forests above which rises the rampart of the pink Dolomite peaks. Cima da Conegliano had had before his eyes the same mountain landscapes, the same transparent skies, and the blue waters in which sleep the silhouettes of the fortified castles, and when he painted the delicate altar pictures whose clearly defined figures recall his master Giovanni Bellini less than they do Mantegna, he supplied from his own mind scarcely more than the subtle frame, aerial and poetic, which he purposed to give them. Titian, who was less than twenty years younger, certainly knew him and studied him, and sought in his work the confirmation of his own presentiments. Later on, whenever he left Venice—and he departed frequently, especially after the descent of

Charles the Fifth upon Italy—he carried with him his sense of space trembling from molecular vibration, and when, on his travels, he found himself among lakes

TITIAN. Salome. (*Prado.*)

woods, and plains sown with low cottages and clusters of green oaks, he felt the confused poetry of the earth as it had never been felt before.

Thenceforward, space enveloped with its waves the pagan poems with which he was overflowing; they expanded in great dazzling shapes of coppery flame, in fruits that rolled from baskets amid the clang of tambourines and cymbals during the stormy afternoons

when Dionysius and his train of nude fauns and bacchantes burst forth with a great clamor from thick woodlands. The men of those times, having escaped from the Christian world, possessed such reserves of love that they could yield to their passions without haste, without turning back, without loss of vigor, with the peaceful certitude of nature's elements. While the bacchanale roars and voluptuousness mingles its panting breath with the cry of the panthers, the earth breathes like a beast. The skies are full of low-hanging clouds charged with lightning; blue vapors arise like a sweat; a subterranean sap circulates through the soil, scatters white foam on the surface of the brooks, and swells the black thickets where nude men and women, clasped in each other's arms, glow like red gold. But it is only with Tintoretto that the human drama will resound to the borders of the thunderous sky in tragic clouds and purple lightning. Here space is unconscious whether its storms strain the nerves of men and women; the men and women are unaware of the fact that they are participating in the heedless symphonies in which the violence of the primitive instincts is only one note in the sound from the dark thickets, in the murmur of the fountains, in the breaths of hot air that drive along the clouds, in the distant lowing of the herds that descend the sloping meadows, and in the great silence of the plains that vanish in the vapor of the summer days.

The beautiful mature bodies of the Venetian courtesans were displayed before him on broad beds, wearing only a necklace about their throats, and holding a tuft of roses in the hollow of their hands, or they lay under the trees before a kneeling faun; and the beautiful, mature bodies glowed with the same serenity

that he had found in the earth. They were waiting. Love was for them a thing accepted unaffectedly, filled with a tranquil intoxication, without disquietude or remorse. Their eyes were the calm eyes of animals, in

TITIAN. Paul III and his Nephews. (*Museum of Naples.*)

which swim the russet reflections of their heavy hair and of the space gathering around them which envelops them in amber. Their breasts rose and fell slowly, their bellies had waves of muscles which merge in the angle of shadow formed by the broad thighs as they come together. With his brush Titian amassed the heavy

TITIAN. Doge Gritti. (*Czernin Gallery, Vienna.*)

atmosphere in order to knead it with the substance of the soil, the pulp of the fruits, and the sap of the oaks. And with it all he mingled that winelike purple dipped in gold, which is like a triumphal background for the Venetian apotheosis, which weighs on the shoulders of the bishops in the penumbra flaming within the churches, which dyes the robes of the Doges, unfurls itself from the top of masts and balconies and floats behind the gondolas, which shimmers on façades, stains the walls and floors in the halls of the Ducal Palace with blood as if it were rising through the pores of the stone dungeons below where the Council of Ten caused its decrees to be executed, fills the twilights, trembles in the reflections of the lanterns at the evening water-festivals, and which the sails of the ships trail over the sea.

When Titian abandoned that impassive sensual idealism which was the dominating force of his activity, he discovered in the somber purple, lit up by golden spangles, and tempered by fire and sulphur, a powerful and tragic atmosphere, enabling him to enter the human drama with the decision and vigor of which only a great spirit is capable, a spirit which continued to grow up to his hundredth year. It is that bloody light shed by the flickering torches which brings out of the shadow, where the executioners torture Him, that terrible "Christ Crowned with Thorns," painted, as was the "Pieta," one of the most melancholy and human works in the history of painting, when he was more than ninety-five—a painting in which there was a premonition of the genius of Rembrandt. It is this bloody light which rises with the dawn and streaks the black iron armor of Charles the Fifth as he comes forth from a black wood, his livid countenance touched by red

TITIAN. The Original Sin. (*Prado.*)

reflections as he bestrides a black horse caparisoned with red—a horrible symphony of murder, a painting of night and of blood.

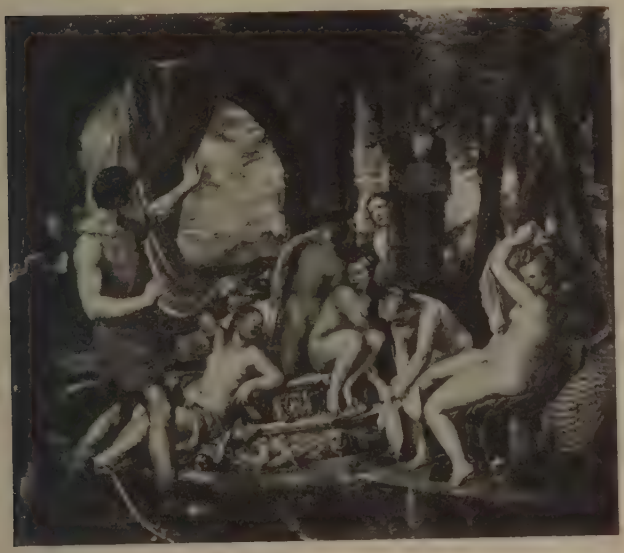
Thus there were two directions to his nature which parted at the common center of his limitless receptivity and of his acceptance of life; to organize themselves into vast sensual poems, or to scrutinize the moral world with a cruelty as impassable as his lyricism had seemed. There are no portraits, in Italy or elsewhere, which surpass his. They have that power of defining character which caused the Florentines—Donatello, Andrea del Castagno, Verrocchio, Ghirlandajo, Filippi Lippi, Botticelli at times, and even Benvenuto—to produce such terrible effigies, concentrated, nervous, frenzied, and cut out in the mold of passion. Only, these are draped with decorative fullness and searched out with a tranquil penetration unknown to Florence. The fever that consumed her painters no longer exists in Titian. He can paint with a sincerity so uncompromising that it leaves to the Cæsars and to the popes their malformed skulls, their atrophied masks, their jaws of beasts, and their hideous and low mien; he can describe those black-garbed silhouettes, those muscular hands that clutch the hilts of swords, and those pale countenances with haggard eyes, all those violent men made for murder as women are made for love. It is the period in which the *Condottiere* holds Italy in his grasp, when Machiavelli writes *The Prince*. Titian's heads summarize all Italy, from the ferocious portraits of Antonello da Messina who had brought to Venice the oil painting of the Flemings, and from the tightly drawn faces of Giovanni Bellini to the broad, somewhat soft effigies of that fine painter Paris Bordone, and to the great figures of the Doges which

TITIAN. Nymph and Shepherdess. (*Vienna.*)

momentarily arrested the disordered, gorgeous, and brutal vision of Tintoretto.

v

Between Tintoretto and Titian, who resemble each other so much at first view, as Veronese resembles them,



TITIAN. Diana and Actæon. (*Prado.*)

as all the Venetians resemble one another when the eye lets itself be dazzled by those heaped-up forms now brilliant, now somber under the red sunlight of the horizons of the sea, there is, however, even if their language has often the same images and the same sonorousness, almost an antagonism of soul. We see two Italians, two Venetians, of whom one might be a Greek, the

other a Hindu. With the former, despite the grandeur of his creation, simple and sober though it is, a rhythm to which his exuberance yields as a river of blood yields to the heart, the will, issuing from the same sources as his sensibility, rises to the same plane, and without effort. With the latter, it is an orgy, a panting and torn rhythm like that of an element which has burst its dykes, the will ever straining to resist the frightful and continual assault of the most sensual nature that without doubt ever appeared in Occidental art, the will ever swept away and whirling like a straw in the wind. A torrent of sulphur and lava after the regular eruption of the autumns, the springtimes, and the summers.

TITIAN. Portrait of the Painter, detail. (*Prado.*)

He is a Michael Angelo in reverse. He had seen him, he would have liked to resemble him. "The coloring of Titian and the drawing of Michael Angelo," he said. He was never either the one or the other. He was never entirely master of himself, and the thing about him that astounds us is his perpetual defeat, even as the thing

in Michael Angelo that subjugates us is his perpetual victory. He was Tintoretto, and that is a great deal. It is something so great that one hesitates at the threshold of the work, declaring it hollow and loose through fear of entering upon it. He was one of the miracles of art, something supremely elegant like naked strength, and as vulgar as strength that tries to don a garment, "the most terrible brain," said Vasari, "that painting has ever possessed"—a bestial hero.

In the history of his mind there are obscure depths. So much strength could well up only from an abyss of sensuality and torment. His life of passion is confused. It is filled with silent or brutal tragedies resulting from his unquenchable desire. He worked by the light of lamps, moving his tumultuous crowds about in the shadow where fires are flickering. He was a musician. He surrounded his painting with the sound of agonizing harmonies which the violoncello snatched in the contractions of his heart. He was swept away in the symphonic storm which arose from all of that intoxicating and triumphal painting, and with which Veronese mingles the voice of sonorous instruments the better to glorify life and heaven. He lived in the sinister glare of visions of color and of monstrous sensations which did not leave him a minute of repose.

With frescoes and with canvases he covered a hundred walls of churches, of palaces, of schools, and cloisters—often for nothing, merely for his own satisfaction. He was like a subterranean gulf, too choked with flames, stones, and smoke, and with a mouth too small to give them an outlet. Everything issued from him in explosions, and scattered at random in ragged pieces, in a rain of ashes and soot, and in sparks that mounted to the zenith. As others improvised a madrigal, he impro-

TITIAN. Christ Crowned with Thorns. (*Pinakothek, Munich.*)

vised epics. As others handle physiognomies and gestures through colors and volumes, he handled the crowds, the sea, and the clouds through his light and darkness—not according to the dictates of his mind, but according to the dictates of the savage instincts imposed by his senses. The crowds, the sea, and the clouds were voices that responded to his tempests.

TINTORETTO. A Senator. (*Prado.*)

His forms interwoven, disjointed, combating each other or falling to pieces, clustered like grapes or loose, drawn out and shaken from one end to the other by the ideas and feelings that were swept away in the vertigo of a mind consumed by the anguish of fecundation—these forms he had not the time to incorporate into the wall in order to form a block. Powerful in structure, made to suffer by his haste, but which he cannot carry further, being always driven onward in the delirium of his imagination, he allowed the forms to blend on the wall like the dust and sand scraped off by a hurricane. The Italian arabesque which Titian had carried into the substance of space floated in whirlwinds like a broken garland, and when he man-

aged to unite its pieces with the flame of his dream, it dragged after it such masses of tangled forms that it disappeared under them. What does it matter! One felt the arabesque in the quivering depths, in the very dynamism of that tangle. The sudden gesture that strikes or curses or implores is so spirited, it appears in the midst of the drama with such vigor, that it carries with it the whole drama, which we re-enact in our minds. One might say that the painter, from the visible side of the forms, was giving expression to all the invisible surfaces which are made to converge by the lines of force, in the hand, the arm, the leg, the torso, or the face in action. Like an athlete overwhelmed by the rising tide of a confused, organic matter in which only the light of intelligence could distinguish differences and impose directions, Tintoretto grasped the situation in its entirety and wrestled with it so vigorously that it was suddenly formulated, characterized, and organized in all its elements at once. He plunged so deeply into the substance of Venice that only his forehead rose above it. But with what a fiery glance he caused its life to shine forth! Greco bursts from him like a flame, like a hymn from the *Paradise*, that concert of angels, the masterpiece of the painted symphony, in which the subject does not appear, but in which the blue, the silver, the red, the amber, and the gold exalt, in a sonority, now veiled, now triumphant, the glory of space, of music, and of the eternal rhythm under which the universe will henceforth appear to man when he has felt its presence in his heart.

When the spirit mounts in whirlwinds, one discovers where the fire is burning. Tintoretto is the most truth-revealing of all the Venetians. His lyricism belongs to the soil. Venice, the resplendent, lives in him surely,

the theatrical and romantic Venice of the processions and the Orient, but also the trivial Venice, the southern and Levantine port where the colors which dye the robes and draperies of the triumphs were made from the rotting rags that ferment in the humidity and the sun. The house of the father of Jesus is a carpenter-shop, the crowd that climbs to Calvary with him is the crowd of the Riva degli Schiavoni, and the tumult of the Crucifixion is the clamor of a mob. Workmen's tools, bread, and meats lie about in disorder with necklaces of pearls or of coral, mirrors, and golden combs. The odor of the sweating crowds and the odor of the beautiful women intoxicated him like blending poisons. The swan that caresses the splendor of Leda has come out of a chicken coop.

TINTORETTO. The Finding of Moses. (*Prado.*)

The history lived each day gave life even to the anachronism. The men of that time had not the leisure to ransack libraries. And then they had always the Mediterranean mind. It did not change much more than the soil and the light. The turbans, the patrician robes, the animals, and the marvelous fruits entered

into the palaces of Venice to meet Italian merchants and women with bare shoulders; and the immobile Orient brought by the sailors with their wares and their tales mingled biblical history with living history, pagan legend with sensual truth in the eternity of the second which was seized by a man of genius. Tintoretto is the historian of the terrible Republic

That which vivifies and dramatizes the whole, which links it with his spirit, is the somber Venice of the stormy days and evenings, the Venice whose pavement and black waters shine with sulphurous reflections. Here are vistas, the silver seas, and skies having the transparence of colored diamonds; here above all are nocturnal seas, skies in which the clouds are thick and viscous like clots of blood. There are the orange and the sinister coppery tones that Titian had not perceived until the end of his life, when the twilight of the years was darkening like that of the sky, phosphorescent greens like the mold on the sticky soil of the markets where the mud of the lagoon is poured out with the fish; and there are vinous reds that turn almost black and in which the gold gleams no more save as a star gleams when it is about to be extinguished.

In this murky atmosphere, the great nude bodies of the Venetian women shone in splendor. Each time that Tintoretto encountered woman, a kind of concentration of the forces which he was incessantly exchanging with the external universe took place in him. Even when he was painting the "Last Judgment," even at the moment when he was hurling her into endless torment, he covered her with ardent caresses. The fumes of intoxication which mounted to his brain from everything that had a form, a color, a perfume, or a sound, and that caused a kind of purple mist to rise before his eyes was

suddenly dissipated. The divine substance in which it became elaborated and which transmits the human flame invaded him like a dawn. Everything was transfigured. Tintoretto sang of the flesh with such a lyric exaltation that, with a single bound, he cleared the threshold of that loftier region into which the incessant

TINTORETTO. Susanna Bathing. (*Imperial Gallery, Vienna.*)

effort of his moral idealism had not been able to gain him admission. Giorgione, Sebastiano del Piombo, and Titian had remained deeply within the orbits of a calm sensuality into which descended the gold that comes at the end of day when the somber sun floods everything with its memory; the gold that comes at the end of the seasons when the vegetable world stores up in its tissue all the rays shed during the summer months. Tintoretto joins with Veronese to break through the shining gates inside of which the mind meets the light. And

when they come to celebrate the apotheosis of woman, upon whom the soul of Venice, in the sixteenth century, concentrates all its passion, both of them come forth from the bedchamber of purple where the reclining forms had been shown to the eyes of Titian a mass of blond light; they go beyond the edge of the dark forests in which the nude bodies illumine the bluish shadow, they cross the lagoon only to fix upon their palette the opal and the coral, and the opaque or translucent stones which turn with the shadows of the palaces inverted amid the scintillation of the waves. As if to compel the soul of the world to enter the great sacred bodies, the hollow of the backs, the fleshy haunches, the breasts, the arms, the thighs, the knees, and the necks of mother-of-pearl weighed down by the blond hair braided with great pearls, they mingled the amber and the foam of the waters with the glittering space showered with the ashes of stars, where the snow of the solitudes with the azure of night and the mist of the nebulæ stream forth like milk. The conquerors of the sea have made the conquest of the sky.

VI

Venice had seen the hour when, especially with Titian, she had become conscious of herself; she had seen, broadening out to the very limit of space, everything that constituted her own substance, her palaces, her feasts, the water of her lagoons, the flesh of her women, the wooded plains, and the horizons of the mountains which extended to her gates. Hence, the somewhat somber harmonies—golden, red, and blue—which resounded in her skies. Tintoretto had used the dramas of space, mingling them with the substance of Venice, to give expression to the dramas which burned

TINTORETTO. The Massacre of the Innocents.
(*Scuola di San Rocco, Venice.*)

in his heart. Veronese takes possession of space, to incorporate it with the solid and material life which spreads out its setting before his dazzled eyes. But as there is no drama in him, as his vision of life is external and formal—the most highly colored, it is true, the most luminous, and the most magnificent that ever was

TINTORETTO. Narcissus. (*Colonna Gallery, Rome.*)

—he is not himself, he is under the spell of Tintoretto or Titian whenever he looks on dark seas, on tragic seas, or an atmosphere charged with lightning. For him the seas must be a dusty gray, in veiled emerald and sapphire, the skies of rose and so distant that one can see nothing like it except in the feathers on the neck of certain white birds: for him there must be the freedom of the broad sea where the wind blows the foam into a spray, and limitless space filled with vibrating particles of silver.

Doubtless, Veronese, who came from the mainland, had seen that cold silver even as Moretto, the painter of Brescia—and the instructor of Moroni, the studious observer of popular figures, of workmen at their labor, of merchants, and of learned men—had perceived it in

TINTORETTO. The Milky Way. (*National Gallery.*)

the air, on the glaciers of the Alps, and on the white clouds which passed over the lakes. But never, without Venice, would Veronese have warmed that silver with the rays of the sun made iridescent by watery vapor; never would he have caused it to penetrate into the material of robes, into the skin, into the hair of women, into the volume of the waters and the grain of the marbles; never would he have mixed it so constantly as if to give an appearance of airy transparence

to the whole, to the torrents of colors that deluged his canvases, streaming in glittering sheets, and falling in cascades, to rebound and scatter in a mist of harmonies traversed by the light.

The gesture of his figures, correct and living, is a decorative expression. He interprets the movements of the surface of the mind such as one observes at a feast when men reveal to the eyes of others only so much of themselves as will enhance their importance in the world. And that is certainly not to say that Veronese is a worldly painter. Van Dyck has not yet come upon the scene to establish the painter of the world of fashion, the man who will first mislead painting and then dishonor it. The worldly painter is the slave of a *world*, whereas Veronese subjects *the world* to the sovereignty of a genius which moves between the almost undefinable limits of its own caprice and of its own judgment. To him luxury is an object, the same as are the trees, the flowers, the fruits, the sea, the sky, a nude woman. It is an object whose splendor, tonality, and power he also possesses, Veronese, who loves it for the prodigious spectacles that it affords him at every moment, as if it were the sudden and miraculous harvest of three centuries of adventure, of glory, and of effort. He is the poet of luxury, the greatest poet of luxury, the only great poet of luxury who without doubt existed. At least, I see no other, and for me he suffices.

Serious people, I know well, have declared him "superficial." That is their privilege. But I should like them to begin, at least, by penetrating to the complex and secret center of his period. It is true that one does not discover, in these figures which pass before him, a single deep sentiment that expresses itself in an inclination of the head, a glance, a hand extending itself or drawing

VERONESE. Allegory of Summer and Autumn. detail of a fresco.
(Villa Giacomelli, at Maser.)

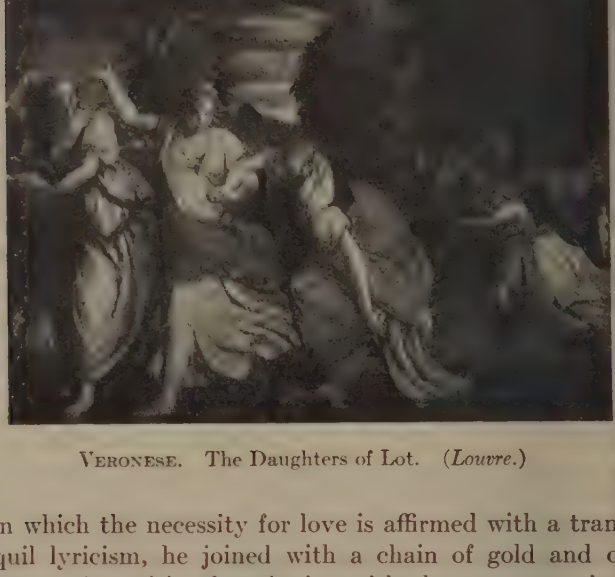
back, an embrace, a parting—all that is a permanent part of us, all that makes us strong and that makes us weak, that we hide with shame, that is sometimes humiliating and sometimes sublime, when we are aware that we are under surveillance. One watches the noblemen who pass by, one leans from balconies to see the procession of gondolas dragging red, black, or green velvet in their wake, one caresses the luxurious dogs, one converses while looking elsewhere, one fills the cups, one offers baskets of fruit, and one listens absent-mindedly, and never with the heart, to music that is played during magnificent feasts amid which the sound of glass and silver is heard. But the profundity of Veronese is not there. It is in his immeasurable power to combine his sensations with the expression which he imparts to them. If we are to understand by painting the art of organizing colors symphonically, there never was and there never will be a greater painter than this man whose very name, when it is pronounced, resembles the shimmer of pearls and of gold pieces. The world rises up before him like a sea of highly colored visions so multiple, so complex, and so interpenetrated that when they issue forth from him, it is like a universe in which we had perceived only paleness and murmuring, and whose voices burst forth suddenly in triumphal sonority. The colors do not live separately. One cannot determine them. They all enter one another to destroy and to recompose one another. And they are all analyzed to the last degree in order to construct the pictures of Veronese as if they were an immense prism in which Nature re-forms herself, quite unaided, in the interplay and interpenetration of the tones, the shades, the reflections, even as the light re-forms Nature every second of the day from sunrise to sunset.

That which remains, especially when one surveys those palaces with their high arcades, those bright forests of balconies and colonnades which Andrea Palladio opened upon space, when one sees those beautiful forms detaching their trembling outlines against the palpitation of the air, are the inclined profiles against the background of the sky, those great kneeling women, with dragging trains, the glory of their prostrate bodies, and those broad gestures, those obeisances, those noblemen with embroidered robes, those servitors, those musicians, that overpowering splendor which remains of the vision; it is the clear and well-defined memory of a mighty tumult, of an orchestra in which the dresses and the hangings, their reds, their greens, their oranges, their blacks, their pinks, their yellows, and the multicolored flagstones, and the flowers and the fruits and the crystals spread upon the tablecloths, the skin like mother-of-pearl, the hair shot through with gold and amber, and the aërial harmonies all playing together and answering one another, abounding in rolling harmonies and scales which mount unceasingly and descend back and forth from one end of the keyboard to the other, sending forth in great waves the voices of the flesh, of the stuffs, of the marble, and of the sea, and making, as it were, a great sound of festival carried to us by the wind.

Veronese is the painter of the glory of Venice. He has celebrated her strength and her wealth and her dominion over the waters. He saw the clouds tremble in her forms and in her reflections. He unfurled her flags in the light. He mounted the terraces of the palaces of the Orient to see the procession of the Doges when they went forth to cast their wedding ring into the Adriatic. On his palette he ground all the pearls of the

sea that her victorious fleets gathered in. And in the train of those fleets he followed the curve of the globe and divined the aspect of the azure sails which cradle him in the ether.

In introducing the rays which traverse space, its coolness, its murmurs, its breezes, into poems of mythology,



VERONESE. The Daughters of Lot. (*Louvre.*)

in which the necessity for love is affirmed with a tranquil lyricism, he joined with a chain of gold and of leaves the spirit of antiquity with the new paganism which was to flower later on in the soul of Watteau. In this sumptuous and sensual Venetian, in the trees clothed in ivy and moss from which red flowers burst forth, in the subtle forms, nude or veiled with light purples which palpitate on the waves like rose petals, one recognizes the dawn of that illusive poetry which,

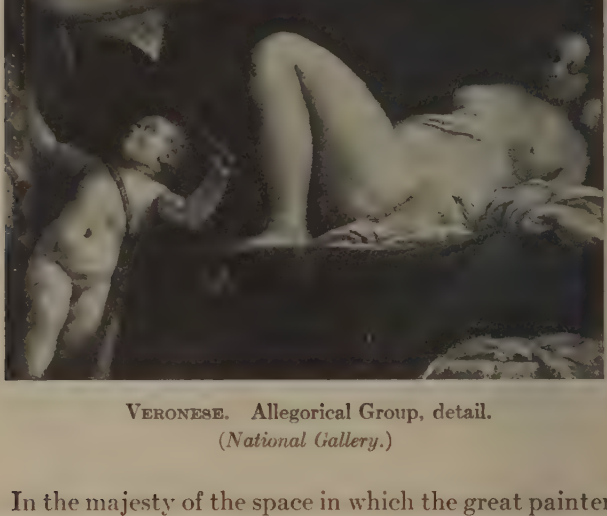
two centuries after him, was to sing the smiling and brave death of the old aristocracies.

VII

This poetic divination is all the more admirable that the century which followed was quite silent in Venice, whereas the same century, through the men of the north of Europe, through Poussin, through Claude Lorrain, and through Rubens, was preparing Watteau. Even during the time of Veronese, with Bassano, whose wine-colored reds and opaque shadows now invade the darkening backgrounds, with Schiavone and his declamatory landscapes, and with the abundant trivialities of Palma Giovine, the artistic life of Venice sinks into vulgarity, as her sensual life is swallowed up in a low and weakening debauch. In the seventeenth century, and in the eighteenth especially, Venice is the gambling house and brothel of Europe, to which she no longer offers anything more than the elegance and the amusements of the carnival, in which the bizarre fantasy of Pietro Longhi, one of the last of her painters, and the verve of her musicians, Pergolese and Cimarosa, alone supply whatever elegance of spirit there is. After having lived by her work, she lived from her income—that is to say, from the work of others. No society, no civilization can endure that.

And so the Watteau of Venice is Tiepolo. A dancer of obeisances furnishes the hint for the great melancholy poet of evenings and of voluptuousness. He is the decorator, necessary to this world, which has substituted the pleasure of the rabble for the mighty exaltation of the senses. Amiable, witty, and conscienceless, he is the Casanova of painting, a worldly Jesuit brought forth by a rotting society. An adroit painter, certainly,

with marvelous skill in arranging boudoirs and ball-rooms, he scatters his tones and his forms with the ease of a lord who spends prodigally what does not belong to him; an ingenious, spontaneous, and free colorist, but overfacile and slight in his brilliance. The flesh of the Venetian women disappears under their rouge.



VERONESE. Allegorical Group, detail.
(*National Gallery.*)

In the majesty of the space in which the great painters had dipped their brushes, he could find no more than a few pretty tones and shades, commonplace fundamentally and appearing as if they had been washed by the rain which had at the same time cleansed the verdigris and the gold of the palaces reflected in the canals. He lost his sense of atmosphere in hesitating for a while among the last painters of Venice, impressive painters who still seize, among the old, red-brown stones, the iridescent imprint of the air pierced by the light but

VERONESE. The Rape of Europa, detail.
(Ducal Palace, Venice.)

to whom the city seems so old-fashioned and small that they appear to belong to another race than that of the masters of the past; they seem to be describing other places and speaking another language. Guardi can no longer perceive space save as something that quivers over the walls, or is pressed into the narrow frames of his little canvases, attenuated, and mingling only with the surface of things, which become precise and isolated and thin, like the pictures themselves with their sounds of festivity and the silence of the heart. Or they are muddy and confused, but perhaps all the more sensitive that they contain something of the moist earth, the mold, and are mottled by the phosphorescences fermenting in the waters. Canaletto sees space as something more vast, to be sure, and partaking more of the substance of the palaces, of the sky, and of the canals, but he seizes upon it jealously and caresses it and pampers it—one is tempted to say that he treats it as material for chamber music. He is no longer a maker of symphonies: he is a melodist of the air. Where Titian or Tintoretto, or more especially Veronese, handled five hundred instruments at once to magnify the immense harmony spread abroad from the vault powdered with stars to the pearl and coral treasury of the seas, he takes up his violoncello in which lie dormant sonorous tones, which he awakens discreetly, with a restrained, veiled accent, monotonous, and slightly poignant, like a secret lament and the tenderest of farewells. An almost uniform light, at once reddish and silver, lies peacefully upon his pictures, bathing them in its glow and seeming like the last sigh of an autumn upon which fall the ashes of stars of its last beautiful night. As with Guardi, there is nothing left but the water and the stones; as with Guardi the air grows thin before it

finally dies. Inversely, the same thing occurred among them as occurred among the primitives of Venice. The late painters regret losing the sense of space even as in the early men we get our presentiment of it. It was that which gave them the sweep, the certitude, and

CANALETTO. View of Venice. (*National Gallery.*)

the strength that are no longer found in this period of forgetfulness.

And it was, above all, through space that the glory of Venetian art had existed. By introducing air into painting, it had brought life into it and a continuity—no longer abstract, but active and visible—among the forms that are combined, the planes that recede, and among all the fragments of solid, liquid, or aërial matter which are determined one by the other and pass from one to the other by an infinitive number of transitions that, in his rôle, the great painter makes us feel without

unveiling their mystery. Through her sense of space, Venice is a single block in extent as she is in time, bringing about a momentary communion between the ancient spirit and the modern spirit, between the Moslem world and the Christian world, between Asiatic indifference and Occidental optimism.

For Venice is indifferent. She accepts indiscriminately all the materials which the tide of the world brings within reach of her senses. And Venice is idealistic, because she groups these materials into new organizations, because she is forever generalizing. Her imagination is not given to inventing, but to combining images, and to revealing to us the real by describing it to us shorn of all the accidents and the details which mask its meaning for us; and it is through her imagination that Venice remains Italian and enacts, in the Passion Play of Renaissance Italy, the last act of the poem. To Italy the life of passion revealed a world close to her inner truth. She passed from one form to another to realize, in an effort of synthetic harmony, her need for a standard form in which her desire should recognize itself.

So, in her ensemble, Italy, where, during the Middle Ages, the social bond existed only as an idealistic and passionate reaction, in the heart of a few, Francis of Assisi, Dante, and Giotto, Italy, in need of equilibrium at the time when that social bond which had escaped her was loosening everywhere else, sought the means of adapting the individual through his spirit and his senses to the social and natural surroundings which were being continually changed by the evolution of man. Through Florence and Rome and Venice, by means of the intellectual arabesque and the sensuous passage, Italy gave us that which our needs demanded.

TIEPOLO. The Chariot of Venus. (*Prado.*)

As her rise had been very rapid and the summits she reached had been very lofty, her fall seemed all the greater, and her silence, during three centuries, seemed all the more discouraging. Broken into ten fragments by the politics of the Church, she was unable to recreate for herself the moral life which would permit her to affirm anew her power of idealism in the face of the

GUARDI. View of Venice. (*Poldi Pezzoli Museum, Milan.*)

unified neighboring nations. But such a force does not die. It lives with a latent life as imperishable as the force introduced by Italy into the universe. The fragments have drawn together, the same blood flows through them and knits them together, all the members of the new body feel their solidarity and send back to the nerve centers the fluid which makes them move. The very conditions of modern life, reuniting hostile cities, permit Italy's individuality of passion to rest upon a wider area, that it may define itself once more.

The Italy of to-day presents the spectacle of a country in an irresistible ascent. Its renaissance is a material one, as were those of Florence and Venice at first. But we have no right to condemn the expressions of her inner life of to-day by the expressions of that inner life which formerly was hers. Art is a result, not a beginning. What will remake the Italian soul is not the professional of painting, of sculpture, of literature, or of music who is more lamentably abundant perhaps in modern Italy than in any other place. It is the crowd that passes by the works of the present without seeing them, even as it passes before the works of the past. It seems that Italy already desires, in a hesitating Europe, to play that rôle of the leaven that produces new forms out of a contempt for habit and for the moral rules laid down by weary peoples. The countryside is cultivated, the cities are powerfully active, children swarm everywhere, and obscure life indifferently brings forth its revolutionary pressure. The effort which it is making to live will once more teach this great people how bread and wine are made for our hunger and our thirst.

Bruges

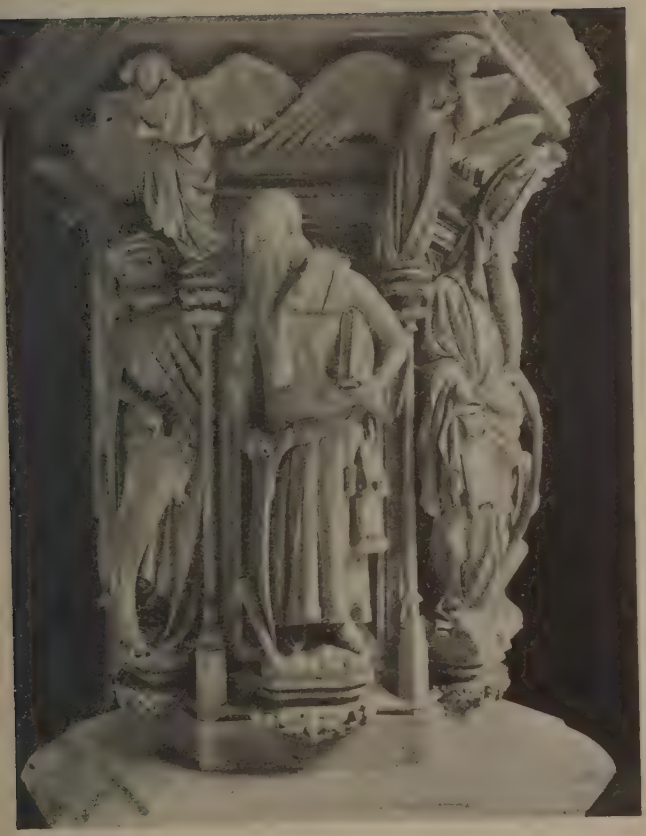
Chapter IV. THE FRANCO-FLEMISH CYCLE

I

THE true spirit of the Renaissance was introduced into the west and the north of Europe only by means of the wars of Italy. In France and in Flanders, the fifteenth century is Gothic; the individualizing of the forms of thought takes place unknown to the artists there. Architects, painters, sculptors, and workers in stained glass all retain the mediæval soul, dissociated and fragmentary, but perhaps intensified as well. It even seems that when we take the fifteenth century in a mass, in its ensemble, it corresponds better to the general and superficial idea of the Gothic which we make for ourselves than the centuries which preceded it. The communal spirit is conquered. The reign of the theologian begins again, but it is a theologian imprisoned by the letter of the law, and one in

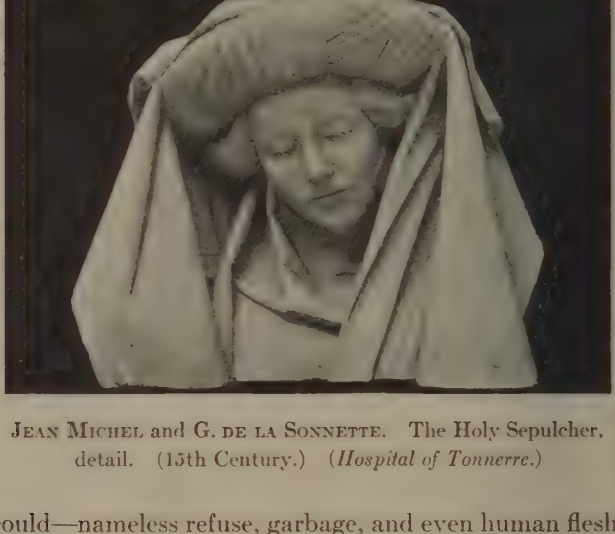
whom the flame is extinguished. The people, crushed again under feudal power, and no longer having any hope, turn in the direction of artificial paradises. The magnificent equilibrium of the great cathedrals is entirely destroyed. The flame rises, crackling, twisting, and licking the vaults; it covers the bare skeleton which had defined for the minds of men the real meaning of the edifice, which inclines toward openwork in the stone and toward slightness, exhausting itself in vain leaps, becomes breathless, and involves itself in the complications of fine detail and of technical tricks. The sickly mysticism of unhappy men, fatigued by the efforts of their will and in despair because of their feeling that life was escaping from them, invaded all the forms of thought and of action. Man no longer believes in his strength; the miracle is everywhere: it explains everything, it answers everything, nothing is expected any longer save by grace of the miracle. The only miracle of that century, Joan of Arc, who represents the common sense of the people struggling against the stupidity of the clergy, the spirit of justice rebelling against the spirit of quibbling, the awakening of pure faith after its disfigurement by bigotry, is first regarded as a providential event through which man is saved the trouble of acting.

The abjectness of the people, before the coming of its great daughter, was only too easy to explain. Never had northern France known times so hard. At the end of the sixteenth century its population was reduced by two thirds. The peasant, having taken refuge in the woods or the quarry, abandoned the fields and the roads to the armed bands. Guides, brigands, and soldiers devastated the countryside and held the towns for ransom under the banner of France, of England, of



CLAUX SLUTER. The Well of Moses, detail. (*Dijon.*)

Burgundy, or of Armagnac. Cold and hunger killed more people than war did. Emptied by the plague, by famine, pillage, and taxes, the ruined cities were nothing more than camps, where all industry, all traffic, and all social life were arrested. The wolves wandered about Paris in broad daylight. The people ate what they



JEAN MICHEL and G. DE LA SONNETTE. The Holy Sepulcher, detail. (15th Century.) (*Hospital of Tonnerre.*)

could—nameless refuse, garbage, and even human flesh, dead or alive.

And so the moment was one of silence. The Ile de France, in the space of a hundred years, saw the erection of only one edifice, the Bastille, and that was a fortress. Even the enervated cathedrals grew only in those regions where, in place of hope, there were to be found vegetables, meat, bread, and money—in Rouen and in Normandy, which were held by the English.

The French, properly so called, now carved no more than tombs, and the inspiration which Gothic painting seemed to have taken for a moment under the Valois—the first known portrait in France is that of Jean le Bon by Girard d'Orléans—the inspiration of Gothic painting, a descendant of the stained-glass window, was killed. Wandering artists, it is true, followed the wandering monarchy; Jean Foucquet, the painter of Charles the Seventh, founded the School of the Loire and kept alive, in the face of English oppression and of Burgundian and Flemish wealth, the soul of the image makers of the Ile de France and of the tellers of the ancient tales and verse. But almost all of them went where they found action and a little security. The Gothic workmen turn in a semicircle which connects the low countries with the valley of the Rhône by way of Burgundy, that connects the Flemish cities with the people caught at Avignon by way of the ducal court of Dijon; they flee the occupied zone even as the statues and the paintings escape from the forgotten or perverted social architecture.

Flanders, which for four centuries had been such a focus of life, could not help being a focus of art at the same time. From the eleventh century onward, one hears of Bruges, of Ghent, and of Ypres, a great workshop of the dye industry and of weaving. A people of poor workmen, who were, however, grouped into strong guilds, fermented there and rose in a mass at the call of the bells in the steeples when there was need of defending, against the King of France, their municipal liberties, and even before these, the privileges and wealth of the merchants. What matter? The tide was rising. Bruges and Ghent, in the fourteenth century, were able to check Philip the Fair. And the deed was

accomplished with a tumult which revealed depths of life capable of overflowing and of engendering an irresistible moral activity when the hour at which it would be needed should come. And in this place also, art was

BURGUNDIAN SCHOOL. Tomb of Philippe Pot. (*Louvre.*)

born of the will to affirm a new force, looking toward men and away from death.

And indeed, here as everywhere else, the freeing of individual energies was to translate itself especially through the development of that plastic expression which best corresponded with them—painting. Flemish architecture of the new century, still ogival in technique and in appearance, is a manifestation of the middle classes—of the weavers and the brewers. It is very rich, but when analyzed it is feeble. There are too many statues on the complicated façades—statues of aldermen, of merchants, and of soldiers, a perfect orgy of official

effigies stretching out everywhere in line above line, and nowhere opening the leaded panes of the windows to announce the Renaissance. The upright parallel lines enriched with gold from top to bottom and the openwork of the belfries through which the bells sent down their peal form a chiseled shrine which has an appearance of pettiness because it is set in too narrow a space, because of the lines which stretch out and ascend but which are broken at every moment, and because the glitter of the glass and the metals is interrupted and reflected a thousand times. Every time that architecture gains in height and loses in breadth, when the empty spaces are increased and the full portions are slighted, when, in order to obtain effects, it forgets what bound it to the soil, when it forgets its function and its origin, it is on the point of surrendering the rôle that art possesses among us and of effacing itself in favor of other forms of activity. As it has to abandon the search for a plastic expression of a lofty and collective character, something between the mediæval palace of Siena or of Perugia and the individual plastic expression through which Michael Angelo announces a new intellectual order, it has to abandon the hope of discovering in Flanders, between the markets of Ypres and the work of Rubens, a monument in which all the elements of the century shall march on with the exaltation that comes of strength and of harmony. But in Flanders, in the fifteenth century, the social symphony is not completely broken up, and if the movement of dissociation which is to reveal its painters to it is accentuated little by little, the new man will not assert himself until a hundred years after the time when he had appeared in Italy.

Moreover, the Flemish city is submissive. An ally

H. VAN EYCK. Adam and Eve.
(*Museum of Brussels.*)

of English commerce, it cannot reject the union, at first purely nominal, with the richest of the French provinces (which itself draws support from England), and yet refuse to associate itself with the ruin of the French monarchy whose many assaults it had to withstand in the hundred years preceding. Burgundy is, like the Flemish city, a very ancient center of activity. Before the appearance of the ogive, it was the chief focus of the Romanesque school of the North. French architecture in Burgundy took on a character of abundance, of luxury, and of materialism far removed from the ideal of Champagne, of Paris, or

of Picardy, and when the sculpture of the tombs was developed there, as in France, it was with quite a different accent. These are no longer the pure, fine, grave effigies which stretch out in the almost impenetrable shadow of the dark vaults of the churches; they are made for chapels whose light is warm with the rays of stained glass and candles; the blue giants lie on their black marble and are wept over by angels, the monks are well dressed, well fed, and have comfortable incomes; and sometimes, as in the tomb of Philippe Pot, there is a funereal sumptuousness in the strength of the fallen warrior, in the drapery of the black mourners whose faces are hidden, and in the depths of the reds and the golds that glow warmly in the darkness. When the dukes of Burgundy arrive at Dijon, the movement of economic and intellectual exchange between the Flemish provinces and the Burgundian provinces has become more active because of the profound affinities existing between the temperaments of the two peoples. There is the same luxuriance of life—denser perhaps in Flanders, where the atmosphere is heavy with water, where industrial life is concentrated in the cities and revolves about the trades. The people wrap themselves in its wool and in cloth; its drink is a heavy beer. Life is more eloquent and ostentatious in Burgundy, where the closely woven carpet of the grape vines extends from Beaune to Dijon over the dark gold of the hillside, where the breast drinks in more of the air and sunlight in the vineyards where the red wine inflames the faces and floods the blood with warmth. The popular festivals of the Flemings, the great heavy festivals where there is so much eating and drinking, show the nature of the pleasures peculiar to the people. At the court of Dijon,

JAN VAN EYCK. Canon van de Paele, detail. (*Museum of Bruges.*)

the men and women, dressed in velvet, in brocade, and cloth of gold, on the brutal feast-days, express their taste in their heaps of food, their display of coarse love making, their picnics, drinking bouts, jousts, tournaments, and cavalcades over roads strewn with flowers, their fountains pouring forth mead and beer, and the setting they give themselves: cloths worked with escutcheons, velvet cloaks, silken standards, and brilliant tapestries.

Pol de Limbourg. February, miniature from Les Riches Heures du Duc de Berry. (*Chantilly.*)

As a matter of fact, with the merchant-drapers and their dyed cloths, artists soon arrived from the Low Countries at the court of Dijon. There came Melchior Broederlam, a painter of gilded altar pieces, candid, but already drunk with color, like every good Fleming from Flanders. There came Claux Sluter, a good theologian and a great sculptor, whose vigorous influence was to make itself felt in all France and Germany, because he wrenched form from the wall of the cathedral and from the slab of the tomb and because he pushed onward in a movement of such rude and broad eloquence that Donatello and Michael Angelo themselves are shaken by it later. He was, however, the only man of the

North, at that moment, who was worthy of the victory, through his strength as an individual and through the decision with which he characterized, by an expressive figure, some essential and simple moral idea. The others took from the tapestry weavers, from the goldsmiths, and from the innumerable miniaturists who frequented the court of the Duke, more than they gave to them. The Valois confirmed the tradition of their family. Like Philip the Bold himself, his brothers surrounded themselves with artists. Jean Bandol came from Bruges at the call of Charles the Fifth. The *Book of Hours* of the Duc de Berry, a great collector of illuminations, had been covered with admirable little pictures by Pol de Limbourg, the first among the Flemings to feel his fraternity with the soil that we dig, with the air that penetrates us, and with the animals that work for us; the first to seize the poetry that is forever in all our gestures and in all objects, and of the murmur of summer, and of the silence of the snow—the first to foresee that Breughel was to come.

In the northwest of Europe, where the walls of the cathedrals, invaded by the great windows, did not, as in Italy, permit the development of the fresco, painting came forth from the very heart of the great Gothic body through the illuminated manuscript. Since the sixth century in Ireland, the seventh in England, the eighth and ninth in France, from the Loire to the Rhine, where antique and Byzantine influences had entered with Roman architecture, sacred books, missals. psalters, and Gospels had begun, very timidly and discreetly at first, to be covered with figures in flat tints, awkward, stiff, rendered anæmic by monastic rules whose rigor was even to be accentuated by the Benedictines of the tenth century. When the school of Paris arrived, at the hour

when all the territory watered by the Seine was being covered with ogives and with towers, the flood of light that invaded the nave of the cathedrals illuminated the sacred texts.

Then an immense song of joy bursts forth. The monks are no more able to retain the monopoly of painting than that of the sculptured image or of the art of building. The laymen seize upon books which, even when they are sacred works, live wholly because of their images. Formerly, the images had hardly dared to decorate the capital letters, to call attention to the text for purposes of meditation. Now they take possession of entire pages and every day they drive back the margin which they will end by suppressing. The old background of uniform gold does not always disappear—the blues, the blacks, the reds, and the greens sing against it with so much force!—but the illuminator reserves the right to make use of it according to his will. It lights up with his cheerfulness. Patient because he is happy, he sometimes spends his whole lifetime in mak-

Pol de Limbourg. December, miniature from Les Riches Heures du Duc de Berry. (*Chantilly*).

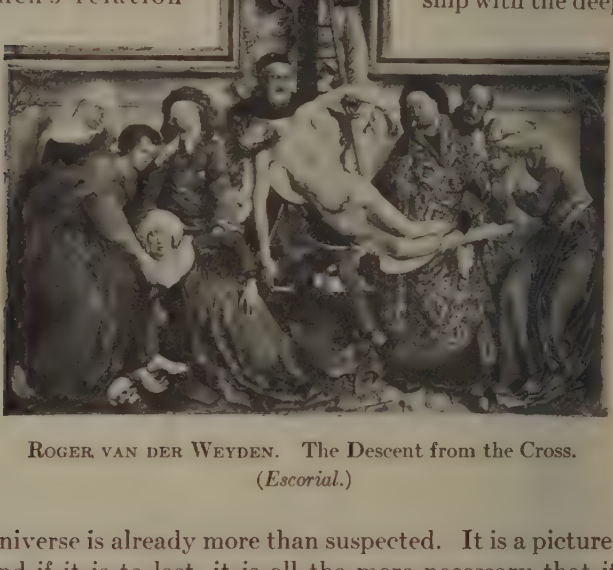
ing the indestructible parchment flower with his idle gossip. When one opens those heavy volumes which from the outside seem so tiresome, there is an eruption of hymns to the light and of sudden apparitions of gardens and skies. One must look very closely to discover the gentle Christian mythology hidden under the

The Unicorn Tapestry. (*Cluny Museum.*)

downpour of rays of light, like a pale flower in the fire of summer. Everything is a pretext for putting fire into the dull pages, the sea, the woods, blood, wine, the plumes in the wings of angels, the robes of male saints, the eyes of female saints, their hair, their aureoles, the open gates of heaven. In the fourteenth century, after Flanders has grafted upon the malicious and frank observation of the French illuminators, her love for real landscape and for the real human face, both scrutinized in their smallest and their heaviest details, we have

JAN VAN EYCK. Flemish Merchant and his Wife. (*National Gallery.*)

nearly reached the synthesis from which the painting of the northwest of Europe will come forth. The illumination has invaded the page, and it stifles there; it lacks air, although into its too-limited space a great draught of air has entered, although the landscape has distance and the planes separate from the rich chaos of the colors, although men's relationship with the deep



ROGER VAN DER WEYDEN. The Descent from the Cross. (*Escorial.*)

universe is already more than suspected. It is a picture, and if it is to last, it is all the more necessary that it escape from the book, because the printing press is coming to transform the book, to dethrone it from its rank as an almost inaccessible idol, and to enthrone it in the popular realm of endless diffusion and circulation.

II

But it was not the printing press that freed painting. It had emerged from the book before Gutenberg's inven-

ROGER VAN DER WEYDEN. The Descent from the Cross, detail. (*Escorial.*)

tion had disseminated books beyond the limit of universities and of convents. The two movements had the same source, and they responded to the same need. Since the people no longer built markets and churches, it was necessary that the soul of the markets and the churches should express itself in books and thus fructify the souls who were to realize its hope. The van Eycks were expected. One is not astonished to find them so sure of themselves, having almost nothing of the primitive about them, and as they would be if they felt behind them a tradition already ancient. Indeed, they were the flowering of Gothic art, whose expression in color had ripened little by little in the pages of the missals.

It was necessary for oil painting to be popularized by those whose mission it was to open those pages and to spread over the multitude the golden fleece which it had gained with so much difficulty. It was by this means that they were able to incorporate with their paint the limpidity, the transparence, the deep and gentle brilliance of the light of the North, the light of clouded skies, of plowed fields with their glow, and of moist forests, the light that does not go out, however pale the sun. The "Pascal Lamb" of van Eyck celebrates at Ghent the triumph of the light almost exactly at the moment when the "Baptism" of Masaccio expresses the ideal of form which appears to him and which is the despair of the Florentines. The robust faith of the Flemings preserved their sensuality from the disquietude of the Italians. They remained men of the Middle Ages, with sound hearts and eyes as full of light as the glass of a cathedral window; it was quite unconsciously, without suffering and without haste, that they led northern Europe into unknown paths.

ROGER VAN DER WEYDEN. Portrait of Philip the Good.
(*Antwerp Museum.*)

The van Eycks, who came from the Meuse and thus join Flanders and France to the Gothic Rhineland and to the school of Cologne, did not perceive, any more than did the men of the thirteenth century, any antagonism between the paradise of the senses and the paradise of the inner life. In no way did they stand apart from the merchants of Bruges and from the manufacturers of Ghent. They were worthy men, loving their work, robust in their honesty, and their minds were troubled very little. In covering their canvas they were as conscientious as good weavers, good drapers, and, I was about to say, good dyers. Paradise, for them, was a thing of regular prayer, of faithful attendance at church services, of listening to the priest and respecting him excepting in matters of business, and of painting, of accepting life simply provided it had a good surrounding of dyed cloths and of carved wood, with money in the strong-box, beer in the cellar, and an abundance of linen in the wardrobes. It was also a matter of journeys from city to city, on heavily built horses that walked or trotted and whose pace and docility gave one a chance to fill one's lungs with the odor of the meadows covered with daisies, to ride past the bushes covered with flowers, to delight one's eyes with the colorful sights of green and blue expanses where all the greens and all the blues mingle with each other and follow each other, where all the plowed lands and all the trees and all the horizons together implant in the mind imperishable harmonies which tell us clearly of the bounty of the harvests, of the depth of the soil, and of the weight of the clouds that cross the broad sky. And all this is necessary, because when a bad season comes, when the roads are broken down, when the water that has overflowed from the ditches

has drowned out the fields, one can then bring into the big rooms behind the colored glass of the windows a little of the broad splendor of these landscapes; one can break up the box of jewels that nature has furnished us and of it make dyes for furred robes; one can carve furniture decked out with lace made from the wood; and with the money earned by the sale of wool and skins, jewelry of a somewhat barbarous type is bought. In the rich gloom of the household the carpets dull all sounds. Intimacy and sumptuousness are obtained by dark oak, by the tapestry hangings, dull or resplendent, quite often even when only half seen in the weak light; they bring silent crowds into the room with their extreme and heavy richness, they afford depths of peace and comfort into which bad weather can no more enter than the echo of the unhappiness of the poor. In this unbroken luxury, deep red, gold, and blue predominate. But the reds of the robes and the carpets and the tiles are repeated in the glow of the coppers, the glow of the coppers also wanders over the dull mirrors, and

PETRUS CRISTUS. Young Girl.
(*Berlin Museum.*)

so all things respond one to another—the gold and the copper, the reds and the blues—and a meticulous and heavy harmony reigns; it has a quality like that of enamels and of sparkling precious stones.

In this land of Flanders which lived from the manufacture and commerce of dyed cloths, where laces, velvets, and textiles were piled up in the houses of the citizens, where tapestries were hung from all the windows when the ducal processions passed in all the prodigality of their material pomp, it was impossible that the eyes of the painters should not be attracted continually by all these violent, heavy, and full harmonies. When they entered the rooms of the houses, it was as if they were looking into great open chests in which were heaped up, more or less at random, the most magnificent products of the textile industry, forming confused but perfect symphonies because of the splendor of the materials and the relationship among the tones. Of the men and the women who were there, one saw nothing but the hands and the faces, their bodies being covered by thick robes, their heads by dark hoods or by ample white head-dresses that hid the hair, the foreheads, and the necks. The volumes of the bodies and the harmony of the lines were concealed under the folds, the hands and the faces shone forth from the semidarkness and alone detained the eye of the artist with the strongly colored spots which served as a jewel casket. And the picture was composed spontaneously, in a massive block which lodged itself intact in the memory, leaving them neither the desire nor the leisure to choose or to eliminate.

This is what places the Flemings, the van Eycks in particular, as the first among all the painters who have respected the complete aspect of men, adding nothing

Hotel de Ville of Louvain.

thereto save their power of penetration. They pursued resemblances with tenacity, the exact material resemblance, even to the direction, the form, and the disposition of the wrinkles, the number of the hairs and the grain of the skin, and it is this material resemblance which, through its exactitude, carries with it the moral resemblance of the individual whose needs and functions have little by little modeled the face. There are faces of merchants, eager and honest; there are faces of women resigned to their task and almost always represented as heavy with the burden of the new life. Often there are great, ugly faces with long noses, broad mouths, bony jaws, and the skin tightly drawn over the skeleton of the face or loose and falling in thick folds. They are heavy with their strength and their calmness, dense, full, material, and so nakedly truthful that one might think them carved out of the mass of the muscles, the nerves, the blood, and the bones. There is never any generalization, but also there is never a lie. Each of these beings is the one who came to seek the painter; each one is intent on living that moment of his life at which the painter found him, without a thought of the past or a thought of the future. But there are so many of these faces, donors and their wives, and nuns with clasped hands, aldermen, magistrates, and members of guilds, that finally the average type is born of the composite that forms in our memories, like the average type of the faces carved in stone by the image maker of Champagne or Picardy. It is a continuation of the Middle Ages; there is the same process of patient accumulation, wherein every element, seen close by, retains its characteristics, and wherein the ensemble, seen from a distance, forms a compact and solid whole, which it is impossible to disintegrate. Besides, their common

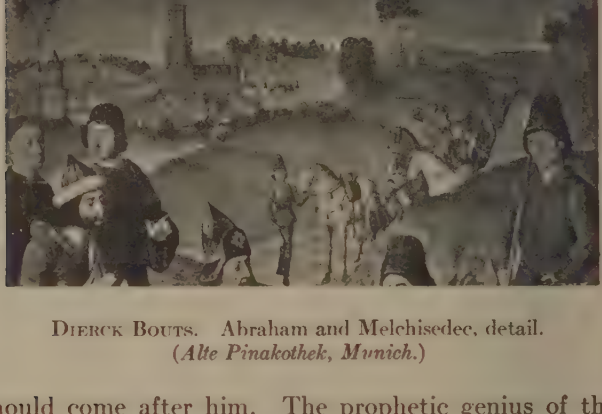
interests gave to the artists of Flanders a common moral life. They continue to belong to the corporations of the Middle Ages. When the van Eycks arrived at Ghent, a guild of painters had been in existence there for a long time which had no other duties or privileges than those of the guilds of the weavers, the blacksmiths, the dyers, or the brewers.

III

At that moment, and with men so sure of themselves, it was impossible that the influence of the individualistic painting of the South which, in the course of the same century, made itself so strongly felt at Avignon, should enter Flanders. One does not find it with the van Eycks, nor with Petrus Cristus, nor with Bouts, nor with van der Goes, or van Outwater or their pupils. However, even if we do not take into account the influence that Italy and northern Europe have for a long time been exercising upon each other by means of the architects and through the exchanges of manuscripts, we may be certain that, from the end of the fourteenth century, the painters of the North knew Giotto and his school, and that from the beginning of the fifteenth century the Italians saw the rising of the sun of the North. But if Italy never asked of Flanders other lessons than those of technique (although it gave a great welcome to the Flemish artists and bought their pictures), it took a century of material and moral impoverishment before Flanders would listen to Italy, and it was not until Antwerp had risen anew that Italy could give to Flanders her strong nourishment, instead of seeing her reject the gift from the South.

Roger van der Weyden remained a Fleming quite as much as the van Eycks, but in a different way. A

hundred years before the Romanizing of this country and far better than they did—because he possessed the freedom that gives self-confidence—he had perceived what it is that gives Italian painting its power of revelation, its educative and expansive force, and its radiance. He had followed the continuous line that the hand of Giotto traced upon the walls to lead those who



DIERCK BOUTS. Abraham and Melchisedec, detail.
(*Alte Pinakothek, Munich.*)

should come after him. The prophetic genius of the Tuscans finds in him its echo, a little dull and as if muffled by the mysticism of the North, but with an accent that is perhaps more human. He has an instinct for powerful harmonies, for opaque splendor, and for insistence upon color, but it is to dramatize life that he gives wings of fire to his angels, and spreads his winelike violet tones over the gradations of the blue in his skies. The power which his race has given him to distinguish types, to give to bodies the thinness and the deformations resulting from misery, to express grief in faces by the violent play of their muscles, he employs

to open the gates of hell. He uses a heavy arabesque, heavy because he drags a weight of real limbs and real bones, full of blood and of marrow, and instead of achieving the effect of bringing out the abstract mean-

HUGO VAN DER GOES. Saints Magdalen and Margaret, detail. (*Florence, S. Maria Nuova.*)

ing of the forms, his arabesque serves him as a means of causing them to take on the same dramatic movement as that of his compact material and his gleaming color; again it is his arabesque that permits him to show the weight of corpses held up by taut arms, to permit us to observe the presence of shoulders and breasts under the thickness of clothing, to accentuate the despair of bowed heads under their white head-

dresses, and to twist necks and hands. Everything hangs heavily and sinks down: knees bend, foreheads are bowed, and only the firm drawing sustains this despair amid the magnificence of life, like a profound hymn that falls and rises to console the vanquished. But there are broken accents in the voice. It is that of a mystic. Something new has passed over Flanders,

MEMLING. The Crucifixion, detail. (*Lübeck Museum.*)

has troubled its luxurious peace, has upset the egoism of its merchants, has broken open their overfilled strong-boxes, and has opened to the winds the rooms of their houses which they had kept too carefully closed. The figures, which formerly knelt or sat on carpets, amid the carved woodwork or the dyed hangings, now walk or fall upon the ground in the paved churches; they are framed by the complicated flowering of the last Christian architecture, and bell towers and pinnacles invade the canvas to offer their lacework for its background, while the stained-glass windows shower it with their rays.

In Flanders and in France the same mystic ardor arises from the manuscripts at the same moment. Processions bearing caskets of gold unroll through the hollow of the streets, golden archangels hover over the openwork of the city with its sharp gables, its slender belfries, its aërial lacework, arrows darting azure and sunshine through the narrow windows of the churches and the houses. Every nerve in the artist's body vibrates with the vibration of the bells and is made tense by hunger, by prayer, by dreams, and by despair. Nothing can express that last gleam cast by the illuminated manuscript at the moment when it enters upon its death struggle. One might say that all the sensual tumult of the beginning of Franco-Flemish painting, all the mystic fire of its ending, had been concentrated upon the page, to leap forth from it in their bugle blast of gold and of fire. It flames like a stained-glass window. The fire of hell and the burning bush give an added red and more somber reflections to the flame of the hot twilights and to the acrid smoke

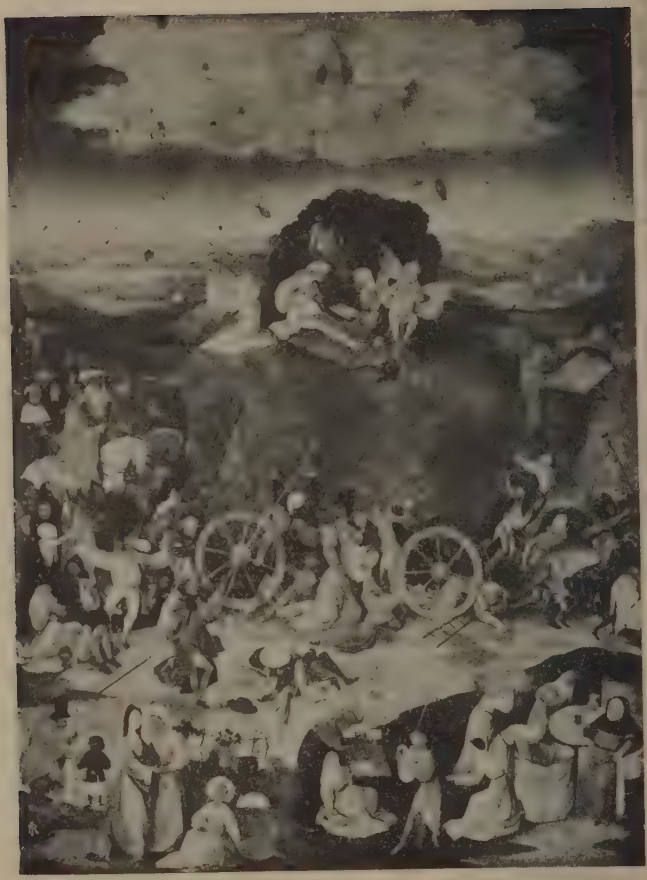
MEMLING. Barbara de Vlanderbergh. (*Brussels Museum.*)

MEMLING. The Entombment, detail. (*Lübeck Museum.*)

that rises from the war in France and from the insurrections in Flanders that were stamped out in blood.

It is because Flanders is suffering in its turn. Without being reduced to the misery of the provinces of northern France, still healthy, active, and very much alive, it begins to feel the weight of the gauntlet of the Burgundian. All its gold goes to pay for ducal feasts and for the war in France, while England weighs more and more heavily upon the manufacture of Ghent and the commerce of Bruges. Furthermore, Bruges and Ghent are quarreling, Ghent aids the duke to repress the insurrection of Bruges, and the duke has the support of Bruges in stifling the revolt of Ghent. It is the beginning of the systematic and bloody exploitation of the Low Countries and of the Walloon country. Liège and Dinand will have their turn before the coming of Spain, the terrible war of the "Beggars," before the time of the stake and the massacres when four generations were ground to earth and the great edifice of their ancestors was brought to ruin and devastation.

Bruges is dying. From the end of the fifteenth century onward, her port is filled up with sand. The last of the van Eycks could witness the defeat of her attempt at liberation. Roger van der Weyden works at Brussels when he is not in Italy. Simon Marmion, the miniaturist from Amiens, lives at Ghent; at the court of Philip the Good, Dirk Bouts is at Bruges, to be sure, but he comes there from Holland; Hugo van der Goes is a Ghent man; while Memling, like the van Eycks, is from the Rhine provinces. One would say that the illustrious city no longer attracts the painters through the splendor of her feasts and the power of her activity, but that they yield, when they come to live there, to that kind of sickly dilettantism which



JEROME BOSCH. Triptych, detail. (*Escorial.*)

seizes upon artists at moments of social discouragement and causes them to emigrate in troops toward the beautiful things that are disappearing. It is true that they still find the things with which to fill their eager eyes: the richness of tone which the red, yellow, and green façades take on in the rain-washed atmosphere, the vivacity, the stability, and the depth of the spots which they outline against the sky and with which they tremble in the water; and they find also the royal mantle of the cultivated land that one sees stretching out across the plain as one stands at the top of the bell tower. And it suffices them to go from Bruges to Ghent to witness the feasts, more sumptuous than ever, that are given there by Philip the Good—Burgundian courts of love, processions, banquets, tournaments, and chapters of the Golden Fleece. Hugo van der Goes receives them there. He is a powerful painter, too pensive and tender not to know what drama is, too strongly sensual also to forget the pomp and magnificence of the time, the savor of the soil, and the diffused light with which space is filled. The deep, moist earth, the dark splendor of the foliage; and, over this confused world whose life arises everywhere, in dew, in sap, in vapor, and in forces of fecundation, the meditative gravity of the faces and the weight of maternity prove that under the froth great depths of water are sleeping. But Bruges is dying, and Flanders is suffering. The feasts are external things, and among the reds and blacks which with their heavy rich notes dominate the flutter of the mantles, banners, and draperies, the eye can now see scarcely more than the colors of blood and of mourning.

The mysterious underside of Flemish life, which had been hidden by the brutal orgies of the lords and by the pomp of the merchants, mounts to the surface of

their soul. The secret and miserable Flanders of the nuns and of the poor people has its day. The artists have witnessed "the apparition of the mystic workingman, of the illumined Lollard, and of the visionary weaver, who had escaped from the cellars, terrified at the daylight, pale and wan and as if drunk with fasting."[1] One sees it in the pictures of Dirk Bouts, full of ascetic figures, sick and violent, people stretched out with their heads cut off and their blood flowing; full of beloved martyrs, sad and gentle; and of executioners with hideous faces, as one finds also in the manuscripts of the time and in the sickly painting of Jean Malouel, who came from the Low Countries to instal himself in Paris—miserable and ruined through the Anglo-French war. Hatred is dominant in him together with the bitter regret that he can not flee the social hell so as to take refuge in the country which he adores like a good Hollander, painting its meadows which are crossed by woods and by brooks, its hilly distances garnished with pasture land, that rich countryside whose depths are covered with bluish vapors and where the steeples and towers are piled up in the crenellated cities.

Memling, on the contrary, resigns himself; his love is stronger than his resentment, as the inner refuge of the convent is stronger than the furious excitement of the famished weaver. It is the death-struggle of Bruges. With his mystic sweetness he has walked along the canals which are falling asleep, he has watched under their waters the flight of the pale clouds, his eye has followed the wandering flotillas of leaves which the wind scatters over their surface, he has seen the flowering of the glycins which fall from the walls to drop lightly in the water, he has taken long rambles in the

[1] Michelet, *Histoire de France.*

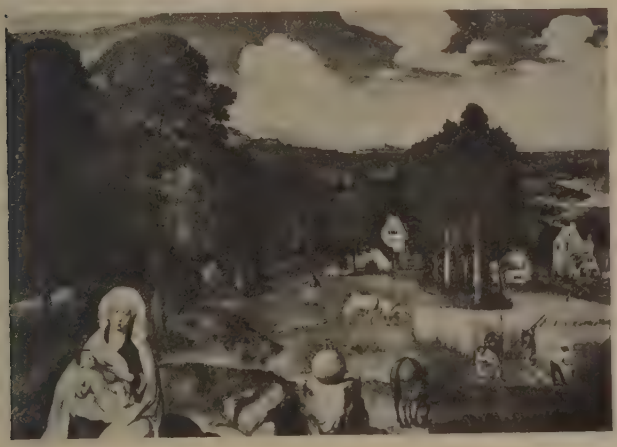
courts of the convents where the plane trees are becoming bare, where, behind the glitter of the thousand window panes of the façades, life is being extinguished

GERARD DAVID. The Punishment of the Wicked Judge. (*Bruges Museum.*)

and muffled with silence so that, through the egoism of peace, it may atone for its orgy of materialism, of color, and of tumult which had been going on for so many years outside. His principal work is destined for the

hospital, and perhaps, more than the real Flemish landscapes, where one gazes far out into the open air, walking over fat lands all surrounded by sky, he loves the fine, precious landscapes in which shimmer the limpid pinks and the blues of the jewelers. One would say that he rarely comes forth from his inner life, that he rarely sees the world save through the glass of his windows, thereby giving his crowds the appearance of being far away and his landscapes the appearance of being precious, veiled, and spiritual. He does not himself experience the misfortunes of the world, but rather he finds the trace of all of them in the attitudes of the kneeling men and women whom he poses symmetrically: he finds that trace on their faces which he scrutinizes slowly, noting how the suffering of several generations has accumulated in the countenances of men who have grown thin and anæmic and in the pale, sad, and gentle faces of the women, sometimes showing sorrow in the long lines, still further drawn out by the nun's headdress over their foreheads and temples. Where are the strong effigies of Jan van Eyck, full, sanguine, and well-fed? Where is Jan van Eyck himself, so sure of himself—he of the heavy substance, of the solid mind? Memling is a very careful, somewhat discreet and timid man, infinitely patient and attentive, infinitely an artist, sick, doubtless, with a tender and cloistered mysticism, a lover of silence and of engravings, of old books, of violins, and of poetry, a man who welcomes the humble, who is humble himself and very good. If his martyrs are pitiful, his executioners are less repulsive than those of the others; character loses its force through being too minutely searched out, and dramatic action is somewhat veiled through his delicate examination of detail and his meticulous harmonies.

They are pure, however, and sometimes brilliant, with a liquid and limpid glow which makes the reds and the blacks comparable with those of the Japanese lacquerers, and to be found outside of Flanders, during this century and the next, among the Germans, in Italy among the Sienese, and, unexpectedly enough, with Raphael;



PATINIR. The Flight into Egypt, detail. (*Prado.*)

one also finds them in France with Jean Malouel and among several of the anonymous little painters who precede and accompany the Clouets. These are not the only relationships between this century and Japan, and, what is more singular, with the Japan of the same period. At every moment, in the Sienese paintings of the fifteenth century, one finds elongated faces with oblique eyes which, one would say, were drawn by a painter of Nippon. Pisanello and, later, Dürer understand plants and animals in quite the Japanese manner,

and certain little Flemish portraits by Memling, Petrus Cristus, and Hugo van der Goes, like those of the dukes of Burgundy, dressed in black with the Golden Fleece about their neck, clean-shaven, pale, and broad faces of dominating and sensual men, make one think of the art of their contemporaries of the most distant Orient, because of the purity of the harmonies, the sober oppositions, and the decision of the outline. Is it by chance? Perhaps not. The Portuguese had already brought to the ports of Europe lacquered boxes and platters and perhaps even paintings by Meitcho, Shiubun, or Sesshiu.

IV

This purity, this transparence of tone, this inviolate magnificence emanating from the material itself, so hard and condensed that it seems, like a black diamond, to radiate its own light, are to characterize the last school of Bruges. One finds them, even, with Patinir, perhaps the most moving and most profound lyricist of landscape, the powerful and concrete narrative of the labors of the countryside, the ancestor of Peter Breughel. But Patinir stands alone under his skies laden with clouds, in his rich and heavy plains where the forests and the harvest lands alternate and succeed each other to the horizon and beyond it. The painter is no longer living the life of his time, and when he looks upon it he is trying to find subjects through which to render the precious harmonies that have grown rigid in his mind. They are losing their strength and life just as everything else is. Gerard David, the pupil of Memling, no longer sees anything in the world save materials having the purity of gems and tones as deep as water. The faces, it is true, as with all the Flemings of that time, bear the stigmata of the age, of the privations, of

the physical pain, and of its cares, and he makes an honest attempt to make us perceive them. But before all else, he is a painter. He has no longer the heart of van Eyck, and more than a century is lacking before he can have the mind of Rubens. He paints cloths and wood and steel with as much attention and conscientiousness as he does hands and faces, and when he depicts a torture, that which he finds in the tone of the skinless flesh and of the knife that drips with blood is above all a pretext for recalling the red in which the executioners are dressed. He is a master of harmonies as pitiless as the official who cuts open the skin of the tortured man.

Gerard David has no compunction about taking possession of the secrets of his irreproachable harmonies and of his faultless material. One sees clearly that he is the last of his line. He is accustomed to the spectacle which brought hatred and tears to the successors of van Eyck or from which they fled with averted eyes. There, as elsewhere, the fifteenth century had opened veins and torn hearts. In Italy, there was the frightful contrast between intelligence in the ascendant and activity on the decline; in France chronic war, and in Flanders the convulsive death struggle of liberty. But here and there the suffering is not the same. The evil times have provoked the grief of van der Weyden, the wrath of Dirk Bouts, the sadness of Memling, and the misery of Malouel. The torment of Masaccio, of Donatello, and of Botticelli is the result of the effort they make to tear their soul from an exhausted ideal and to recreate the universe. In the former case it is wholly a moral drama that we see; in the latter, a wholly intellectual one. The Flemings suffer because they can no longer live fully, the Italians suffer because they do not know; and when they have learned through their suffer-

ing, they suffer again that they may know more, because that which dominates them is the desire for absolute forms and the imagination with which to realize them.

Hence the difference between the two parallel movements which cause the Occident to pass from a collective form of civilization to an individual form of

QUENTIN MATSYS. The Entombment. (*Antwerp Museum.*)

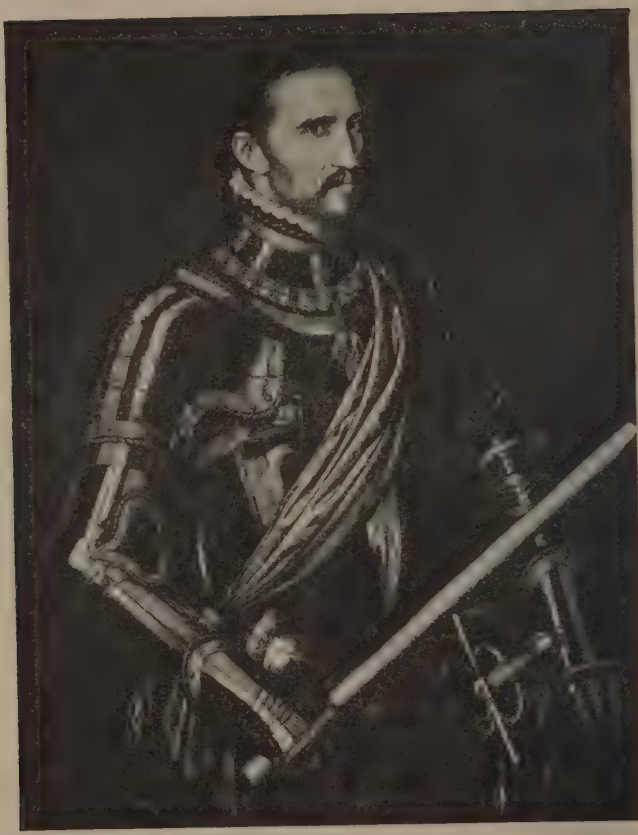
investigation. In Italy, men are led on by passion, they go ahead because they feel the need to; in Flanders, they go ahead in spite of themselves, their old garments please them, and it was because painting permitted them to take possession of intimate and real landscape, one whose especial destination was no longer, as in Florence, that of expressing abstraction, that, unknown to themselves, they play a positive and necessary rôle

in the conquest of the future. It was doubtless because their social life was disorganized, because they were unhappy and bowed down by an overwhelming moral depression that they were paving the way for a generation which was to be incapable of resisting Italian intellectualism, so consoling in its mirages, but so fatal

B. VAN BLEY. Maximilian hunting, detail of a tapestry. (*Louvre.*)

to those who have not, through great struggle, gained the right to understand it and to assimilate it.

Following the French invasion of the peninsula, the slender rampart which the school of Avignon set up against the moral conquest of France by Italy was carried away. According to the law, the vanquished took his revenge. Across France, which had been dragged into the path of Italian culture, debilitated Flanders felt the shock. The painters had deserted Bruges for Antwerp, where, especially after the acces-



Antonio Moro. The Duke of Alba. (*Brussels Museum.*)

sion of Charles the Fifth, the heir to the Low Countries through the marriage of his grandfather, all the activity of the Flemish cities was concentrated; and now all these artists yielded to the attractions of the southern genius. Resistance was difficult. Following the example of Francis the First and Charles the Fifth, all the powerful men of western Europe affirmed their preference for the painters from beyond the Alps, and, at the beginning of the century, the great symphonic school of painting had been born in Rome and in Venice; it made the Gothic ideal seem rather clumsy, very much reduced in its strength and in its necessity, to minds which, in the North as well as in the South, felt the demand of the time for the freeing of the individual.

It was to flee from mediæval impersonality that Jan van Mabuse and van Orley, and Coninxloo, Coxcie, van Hemessen, Martin de Vos, and Jan Mostaert abase their personality before that of the Italians. It made no difference that van Orley followed Rome and Florence and that Martin de Vos invoked the authority of the Venetians, the result was the same—anecdotes too highly dramatized, nudities too ideal, and mythologies too ponderous. If Jan van Mabuse had not sometimes let his eyes rest on the clean-shaven and strong faces of the princes and the merchants, if van Orley, a maker of sumptuous tapestries, had not retained in his puffed-up forms some trace of the dramatic sentiment with which Roger van der Weyden had inspired the beginning of the great painting of Flanders, and if, above all, Rubens had not in his youth had his mind haunted by the clumsy poems of a crowd of artists who talked of nothing but Italy and who advised the young men to go and study the masters there before taking a brush in their hands, we should have forgotten all those who

turned toward Rome. Not one of them was able to turn toward Antwerp, its great port and its luxuriant life nor, above all, to observe in himself the rise of the pride in life which the contact with such a focus of activity might have and should have brought about.

PETER BREUGHEL. Children's games. (*Imperial Gallery, Vienna.*)

Perhaps it was because Quentin Matsys was born in Antwerp, because he had always lived there, and because he laid down his brush only to go back to his blacksmith's hammer again, that he was the only one to catch a glimpse of the new sources which the growing life of Antwerp was about to open. At the rooms of the guild, to be sure, there was talk about Italy, and the pictures which his comrades showed to one another, the great rosy nudities in the sacred landscapes where the gods lead their herds down the slopes to the meadows, increased the temptation that beset him to fall in line with fashion and to abandon the new forces which,

as a man of the people, he was obliged to respect. But he was beginning to understand the lesson of the Latin artists, and to some extent he mastered the urge of an instinct which was recreating itself little by little. He has less empty spaces in his works than have the great Flemish primitives, the organization of his pictures is less confused, and sometimes one finds in them—as in the "Entombment"—a well-defined and well-sustained effort toward the continuity of lines and the balance of volumes which must be the passage between the great dramatic sentiment of Roger van der Weyden and the formidable arabesque into whose tumult—as abundant as the seasons and as well organized as their rhythm—Rubens will bring in all the forms of life. No matter, he is more a Fleming than the others—direct, compact, and with flashes of a strange charm in his landscapes that vanish in transparent distances. As he was a worker in iron, his material is a trifle hard and dry; as he had not had the time to look at the Scheldt, the fat lands which it waters, and the sky, his color is a trifle pale; but he loves full-blooded flesh, good living, and good weather. In germ, he has in him all of Antwerp, from the prodigious Rubens to the mediocre Teniers.

One cannot, especially after having understood Quentin Matsys, deny the necessity and the importance of the part to be played by the artists who turn toward Rome. The Gothic idea in Flanders, as in France and in Germany, had exhausted its resources. The time had come when the artist of the North must die or enter upon the personal research which the artist of the South was proposing to him. He accepted resolutely—Erasmus is of the same age as Jan de Mabuse and Quentin Matsys—and from this spirited submission there came

forth Shakespeare, Rubens, and Rembrandt as, later on, Newton, Lamarck, and Beethoven were to follow.

V

Now, in Flanders, the first man whom this research revealed to himself was a peasant type whose unexpected manner of speech, whose bizarre and powerful

PETER BREUGHEL (?). Parable of the Blind Men.
(*Naples Museum.*)

humor have caused him to be looked on too often as merely a comic primitive, perhaps a trifle ridiculous. He was a man of free and bold mind, of great and radiant soul, whose name was Peter Breughel. He had made the trip to Italy, without undue haste, I imagine, not oversupplied with money—on foot, very likely, loitering, retracing his steps, going roundabout ways in order to walk through the villages nestling among the hollows which he discovered off his road, stopping to draw a clump of trees, a herd, a group of workmen in the fields, the gesture of a child, or the form of a sky. He must have understood Italy. Instead of bringing

PETER BREUGHEL. Autumn. (*Imperial Gallery, Vienna.*)

back from it calligraphic formulas and worn-out generalizations, he returned to Flanders to consider the image—apart from all traditional custom, from every preoccupation of a symbolic or religious nature, from all desire to relate his visions to the great collective and confused ideal which was dying, little by little, among the masses of people—an image very true and pure, but well thought out, very human, entirely personal, which Flanders had implanted in his heart.

He discovered that intimacy of the landscape toward which the painters of Flanders had been tending since the time of Pol de Limbourg, but to which not one of them, save Pol de Limbourg himself, van der Goes, and Patinir, had really penetrated; also Jerome Bosch, whose clownlike humor barely masks a profound and familiar sense of the good peasant soil, of harvests, haymaking, seed-time, and plowing. The van Eycks, indeed, had shown how the plains recede behind the processions and the cavalcades which defiled before their eyes, and Dirk Bouts and Memling had perceived, to be sure, that the undulations of the landscape lose themselves in blue mists the farther away they appear in the distance. But not one among these artists, not even Jan van Eyck, had dared really to confess to himself that the cavaliers, the soldiers, and the prophets were scarcely more than a pretext for them and that the trees and the skies made a stronger appeal to them. And perhaps they cared too much for the heavy draperies, the tapestries, and the robes of green or black velvet or of red cloth really to search out in the countryside, attracted toward it as they were, anything else but harmonies corresponding with their subject—a sumptuous and fraternal accompaniment for the scenes in the foreground.

With Breughel, everything changes, or rather everything matures. He places himself in the center of the plains, and it is the plain itself that lives; the man crossing it does not live with a life any different from its own; he shares in all its changes and all its dramas; he has its habits, its desires, and its needs. With equal interest, the painter demands of men and trees that they commune with him. They are his friends by the same right as the others, he retells the confidences which he has received from inanimate and animate nature with the same simple lyricism, spontaneous, but patient, and perhaps a bit mischievous. Or rather, nothing among all earthly things is inanimate for him—nothing, not even the soil, not even the chips of dead wood, not even objects manufactured by the hand of man, not even the little stones along the road. All of that speaks to him at the same time, discreetly, chatting with him, whispering to him all about its little personal life, modest, but determined to lose none of its rights.

How is it that from this accumulation of little facts so powerful a life comes forth? Whether he is walking through the street or the square of a village, or whether he happens to be standing alone amid the fields, he sees everything, even to the tiniest things, and he pictures them all, suffusing the whole with such animation that the universal poetry of the crowd and of the earth flows over one like a strong, slow wave. How is it that one can count the hundreds of children whom he shows at play, distinguish their little toys, take part in their games; how is it that one can listen to the wrangling and gossiping of the housewives gathered into groups or wiping the noses of their children or sweeping in front of their door; how is it that with a sympathetic glance our eye follows the poor people who come and

go with their carts and their tools and that at the same time one can grasp the main idea of the scene, the disordered swarming of all this humble humanity and recognize, in the confused murmur, laughing and weeping, all the cries, all the calls, and all the whispered tales? How can he perceive all the leaves of the trees, all their slender branches against the white sky, all the blades of grass, distinguish all the birds that flutter and that hop, describe one after another all the windows of the houses and yet withal give to the whole of nature that collective life in which nothing is isolated, but which envelops and covers all things with the same air and the same sky? How is it that he does not forget, when he tells some little story in all its petty details, that he is a painter, and that he is to sustain, from one end of the canvas to the other, the subtlest, the densest, the most discreet harmonies, making the tones work together with a minute science to which his tenderness gives a quality as moving as a singing voice?

His world is a living being that remains living whether seen from near by or from afar, living in the superior and imposing harmony of all its accumulated elements, living in each one of the atoms whose obscure functioning assures that harmony. He bears that life in himself; one would say that he was independent of the meticulous poet who envelops his observation with so much mystery, submitting simply to the rhythm of the seasons and to the irregular flight of the winds and the clouds, and who yields himself, with the earth and the sky, the vegetation, the crops, the beasts and the men, to the most imperceptible tremor of the immense universe. There is not a blade of grass but is affected when the air and the water are affected by the darkening of the sky, not a wave of the river but knows

that it is to strike against a projection of the bank and turn from its course, not a cottage roof but changes its expression when the clump of trees in which it hides is covered with leaves or is stripped of them, not a man, not a dog, that walks with the same step on snow-

PETER BREUGHEL. The Massacre of the Innocents.
(*Brussels Museum.*)

covered ground, on the muddy ground of spring and autumn, and on the ground that is carpeted in summer with warm grass; there is not a tree which does not cut clear and black against the great white landscape of the silent winter, or which does not belong, through the vaporous foliage which it has in August, to the vapors that rise from the earth. Spring quivers and murmurs. Torpid summer has its odor of hay and of sweat; autumn is heavy with all the herds that toss their heads, with its overladen trees, its full houses, its swelling breasts. And now comes the wind; the

PETER BREUGHEL. Winter. (*Imperial Gallery, Vienna.*)

branches are stripped and man hastens to regain his dwelling. And in the clear air of winter or the darkened air of winter, the sleeping earth no longer moves, and one hears no other sound than that given forth by the vibration of water and ice. Into the almost dead harmonies of the seasons, when everything is wet by the rain caught in the grip of the cold, space absorbs the poor or blurred huts whose walls are rubbed down with earth and whose roofs are brushed by the sky that they may have their share in the all-embracing splendor of the world. When the winter is violent and black, it is harder to bear, with its frozen soil that crackles to the tips of the branches, than when the snow has covered its bare carcass and dulled all its sounds, save the voices of men who are climbing a hillside, astonished to find themselves alone.

The great painter who has shown us all this is a man of good heart. That is why he is willing to share the secret misery or the secret happiness of the water, the earth, the foliage, the beasts, the soil, and the air. Like Jerome Bosch, who influenced him greatly, he certainly knew the pain of his century. But he quickly abandoned the exaggerated, unreal, and bizarre symbolism of Bosch, his hell swarming with composite monsters and all the grotesque nightmares of his weird and fantastic mind; as the younger man, Breughel could foresee the approach of the horrible drama which was to drown the kind earth in blood and veil with smoke the great sky of the Netherlands. Beginning about 1520, the ideas of the Reformation had entered Flanders, and since Spain was master there, the books are being burned, the apostles tortured, and the stake is always ready for its victims. Perhaps Breughel knew Antonio Moro, an implacable soul with the savage eyes of a

Fleming completely dominated by Spain, such a man as could give us the atrocious effigy of the Duke of Alba, that executioner whose diseased mind was to express itself through boiling or crucifying the "Beggars" or breaking them upon the wheel. Breughel suffers at the sight of all of this, but as he has imbibed

PETER BREUGHEL. Autumn, detail.
(*Imperial Gallery, Vienna.*)

the sweetness of the countryside, he says nothing, but contents himself with paraphrasing for the future the old legends of the Bible. Always a lover of little children, he has portrayed in the details and in the whole of his pictures—with the torrentlike verve of his contemporary, Rabelais—all their games, leapfrog, sliding-ponds, rounders, marbles, tops, stilts, "straight-oak" and playing at grown-ups; with tender irony he has described their busy and serious little life, from the older ones who play at war to the little ones who make

mud pies or who gravely rake their own excrement; here are all the games of the little children who play at life. Always a lover of the poor little children grotesquely decked out with patched trousers that are too long for them, with coarse shoes, with skirts that are too big and that make them look bulky, and with

PETER BREUGHEL (or School of). The Harvest.
(*Lille Museum.*)

women's handkerchiefs so large that only their little numb fingers stick out from under them, he placed the "Massacre of the Innocents" in a poor village, under the snow; there are ten cottages surrounding a church spire, the pond and the brook are frozen, and a squadron of men clad in iron shut off escape with their raised lances. The soldiers do their work, the mothers struggle with pitiful gestures, poor people surrounding the indifferent captains implore their mercy, the little

ones, knowing nothing and thinking perhaps that it is a game, allow themselves be killed without even looking at the murderers; there are some dogs playing about, a bird, some blood on the ground, a little body stretched out. And that is all. Before his death, he saw the passing of the iconoclasts: he may have seen them breaking the statues and slashing the images which he loved. There is no difference between those who break the idol and those who have unlearned how it must be adored. He already knew that perfectly well; he has spoken his thought in the "Parable of the Blind Men" with its indifferent landscape and the weak chain of men, the empty eye-sockets in their faces upturned toward the sky as they totter along in the absolute darkness of destiny and of reason.

The Gothic men had introduced nature into the cathedral, but in fragments, as decorative elements. The cathedral, from top to bottom, was a symbol, but a symbol fixed by dogma, accepted by the crowd as a revelation of truth. If the Flemings, at the end of the sixteenth century, have definitely consented to enter the modern world, whose program had just been outlined by da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Raphael, and Titian, it is with Peter Breughel and through Peter Breughel, who has revealed to the soul of the North the entire body of nature and who has brought eternal symbolism back to the appreciation of the spirit.

FONTAINEBLEAU

Chapter V. FONTAINEBLEAU, THE LOIRE, AND THE VALOIS

I

IN the fifteenth century the art of the Gothic image maker was not entirely extinct, but outside of the conquered provinces it could not survive unless it abandoned the disrupted architectural symphony never to return. As the Commune was finished, as the monarchy had neither the time nor the leisure nor the resources to complete the cathedrals, sculpture took refuge in the only place near which war passed without entering. Rather than disappear, it peopled the silent naves and the darkness of the burial vaults with great recumbent figures which, with their symbolism the more moving because it was involuntary, participated both in the death struggle of that dream of a social order which had arisen in the mind of the crowd that had vanished two centuries before, and in the crisis of that dream of the monarchy which was

threatening to miscarry. The French sculptors who had covered their country with workmen, with peasants, with animals, with leaves, and with flowers of stone now made nothing except tombs, and tombs of kings. They stretched out man and woman side by side, strong and grave, and not doubting in death any more than they

TOMB OF JEANNE DE MONTEJEAN. Detail.

had in life; in them they formulated their own strength, their own gravity, and the hope of consolation which they no longer expected upon earth. Technical questions increase rapidly, it is true, in the admirable clasped hands, in the beautiful, pure faces with the closed eyes, in the head-dresses, the draperies, the robes, the escutcheons, and the armor. But although its faith becomes less strong each day, although it is besieged by the increasing influence of Italy, the tradition of the Gothic image maker still guides the sculptor

JEAN MALOUEL (?). The Virgin and Child. (*Private Collection.*)

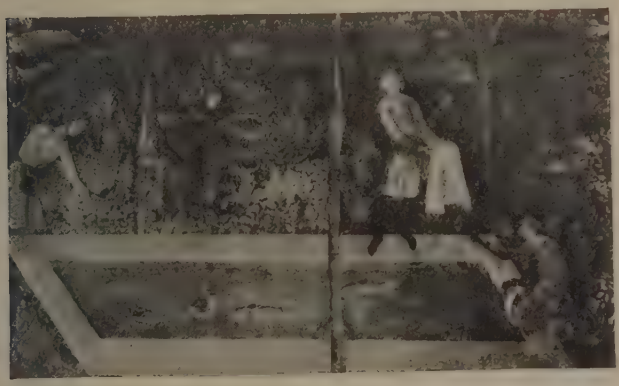
of the tombs down to the time of Barthélémy Prieur, passing through André Beauneveu, Guillaume Regnault, and Germain Pilon himself. It was along an imperceptible slope that he glided from the profound sentiment for righteousness and for death to the anatomical

Jean Malouel (?). Pieta. (*Louvre.*)

science which led Germain Pilon to stretch out his queen and his king nude upon the slab of the tomb.

The art of the tombs is the connecting link between the French artist and the French monarchy. There is no more communal frankness, there are no longer any well-defined provinces, there is no longer a national territory in formation. The great vassals divide up the lands which are not occupied by the English. Hence-

forth, France is the king, until the time when monarchical centralization shall, through the king, have remade France. Where the king goes the artist goes, and the fate and the life of the king will decide, if not



FISHING. (*Fresco of the palace of the Popes, Avignon.*)

the nature of the artist, at least his pretext for manifesting it.

Outside the limits of the English invasion, in Burgundy and in Flanders, one gets the tufty, materialistic, and exuberant art of the industrial cities, of well-filled barns and generous stores of wine. In the occupied provinces we see the flamboyant death struggle of the churches, the miserable image maker seeking his mystic paradises, and Jean Malouel, the artist who remained faithful to the Paris which was ruined by the great wars, weeping with the mothers over their little ones, seeing nothing more than a sick people, adoring the martyrs, and hating the executioners. All the health of France, a precarious and tottering health, to tell the truth,

threatened at every moment, clings to the uncertain fortune of the Valois. It is an art of poverty, thin and threadbare like themselves, but it is alive and that is the essential thing. Despite everything, the hope of the people sustains and accompanies the wandering princes. Jean Foucquet is of the same age as Joan of Arc, and the French idea perpetuates itself in the pages of the missals which he illuminates for King Charles the Seventh, even as it was affirmed under the walls of Orléans, at Patay, at Rheims, and at Rouen. The voice is weak because it is isolated, but it is pure. Before Charles the Seventh, Jean le Bon had heard that of Girard d'Orléans. After him Louis XI will hear that of Villon; Francis I will hear that of Rabelais; Henri II. that of Jean Goujon; and Charles the Ninth that of Ronsard. This race, in its decomposition and the weakness of its spirit, still managed to entwine the royal lily grown blue with poison and the laurel steeped in blood with the oak leaves which the wind of national or civil

School of Provence, 1480.
Adoration, detail.
(*Musée Calvy, Avignon.*)

School of Avignon. The life of Saint Mitre, detail.
(*Cathedral of Aix.*)

wars tore from the Gothic forest. Half Italian, they never entirely misread the meaning of French thought.

Our old painting, in that peaceful Touraine where the kings, driven from the basin of the Seine, had taken refuge, came forth, as in other places, from the Books of Hours which had grown too narrow to contain it. But the flames of hell and the burning paradises did not

School of Avignon. Pieta. (*Louvre.*)

attract it very strongly. It had the good sense of our men of central France, their purity of accent, and their wisdom with its hint of raillery. It came from the country of the good Agnès Sorel, of the broad and healthy Rabelais, of the methodical Descartes, and of Honoré de Balzac who says such rich things in such bare language. It was happy to be alive, and in its thought there was no fatigue. No one was more capable than Foucquet of combining great lines on a background of gold, of quietly building up portraits of sick and ungainly kings, of solid chancellors, of charming

FROMENT D'AVIGNON. The Burning Bush, detail. Portrait of Jeanne de Laval. (*Cathedral of Aix-en-Provence.*)

young women with bare breast and eyes lowered under their veils, an imponderable spirit of tenderness and intelligence floating all about them, in the discreet and reasoned harmony of a painting as limpid as a spring morning. Father and master of French painting, he had, to the highest degree, its structural virtues, a little bit dry, they say, because the lyricism of the color is lacking or reveals itself only little by little—modestly, like a spring that hides among the grasses instead of rushing forth like a torrent. They are powerful virtues, the common property of all our arts—literature, the theater, sculpture, painting, drawing, and music; and they carry along without interruption our eight centuries of architecture in their definite order, their measured cadence, their sensibility which is contained within the outlines of the framework, their depths without shadows and their emotion without shrieking. Father and master of the great sober portrait, in its probity, in its fullness as of a block, never was he more at his ease, however, than when, quite forgetting the magnificent realism of Flanders which he knew through the manuscripts, and the nervous idealism of the Italians whom he studied during a journey to the peninsula in the time of his youth, he set himself to tell, with secret tenderness, of the intimate and peaceful poetry of the fields, the familiar detail of domestic life, and of the neat and active labor of the housewives of Touraine, attending to their linen, embroidering their bed covers, arranging their wardrobes, and watching their soup and their fires. He had a feeling for nature scarcely to be found outside of a people of husbandmen, and which is peculiarly French. His idylls are those of peasants; he spoke as one familiar with the herds that belong to men, and the workers of the soil. All things accepted the life that

JEAN FOUCQUET (?). The man with the glass of wine. (*Louvre.*)

was theirs. There had to be a rapid trend toward aristocracy before painting could follow the hard, proud, and prophetic style of the Italian artists and give to French art its brief spurt toward a lyrical interpretation of form which was to be realized for a moment in Jean Goujon. Foucquet had neither the desire nor the feel-

JEAN FOUCQUET. Birth of John the Baptist, Book of Hours of E. Chevalier. (*Chantilly.*)

ing for drama, and when it passed before him he took more interest in its psychological structure than in the passion manifested in it. Almost always, he was more attentive than enthusiastic and more interested than moved, or rather, he never allowed his emotion to overstep the bounds of his irreproachable sense of measure. A man witty and tender, with a bit of roguery, penetrating even though ingenuous, and much pleased with

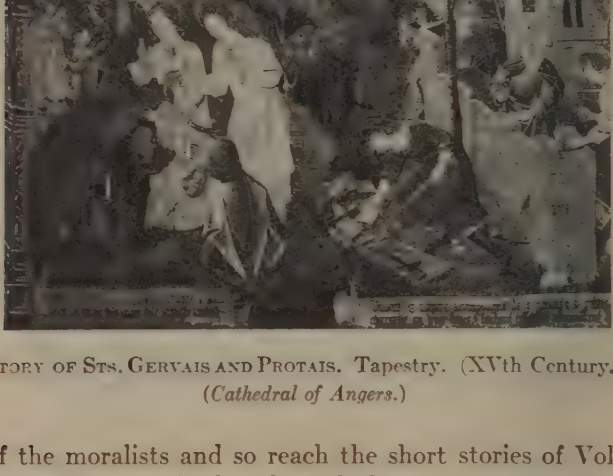
his own ingenuousness. When he paints the circles of azure and of fire which protect his paradise, he knows full well that they can be of no other red and no other blue than the trees of Judea and the cornflowers of his Touraine. And the acid greens of the meadows and the vinous pinks of the chestnut flowers invariably

JEAN FOUCQUET. St. Margaret, Book of Hours of E. Chevalier. (*Louvre.*)

appear under the impalpable bloom of gold which gives the event of daily life its religious significance.

We shall scarcely find this conscious simplicity, this precise vigor, and this malicious candor again in our history until two or three centuries after Foucquet, with La Fontaine, with Molière, with Chardin. They are clearly of this country and of this period; in places they prolong the diminishing murmur of the crowds.

Oftentimes they are still anonymous, as if France were trying to resist as long as she could that tempting individualism in which Italy is instructing her. In these beautiful hands so calmly poised, in these amused faces, tender eyes, and mischievous mouths, the old image makers and the psychological storytellers continue their art, just as they will find themselves again by way



Story of Sts. Gervais and Protais. Tapestry. (XVth Century.) (*Cathedral of Angers.*)

of the moralists and so reach the short stories of Voltaire. It is certain that through the mingling of ingenuousness, mischievousness, and the power of penetration, French portraiture reaches its proudest moment here, and it is first among all the schools of portraiture by reason of its value as psychology. During these two centuries of suffering, of observation, and of conquest, from Malouel to Lagneau, with Foucquet, Colin d'Amiens, the painters of Avignon, Perréal, the Clouets, Corneille de Lyon, and a dozen unknown men, the

school presents a continuity without weakness. But in the rising flood of Italianism, these voices are unheard by their contemporaries. In his church pictures, the master of Moulins, whose name perhaps was Jean Perréal, conceals his delicate French faces, the pure features of his children, and his stately gentleness which he gives forth with discretion as if it might offend the tastes of the court and the new fashions. As for the Clouets, it is in vain that they possess the almost exclusive privilege of reproducing the lineaments of the kings, the queens, the princes, and the great vassals; their importance at the court of the last Valois is really a slight one. Their sitters posed but briefly before them, as if before a lens whose pitiless testimony is to be shown to a few intimates only. Their probity, their observation, and their penetration are such, it is true, that in a few lines, a few lights, and a few shadows barely indicated, they fix forever in their sketches, so devoid of all pomp and even of irony, the profound spirit which each fleeting moment reveals to him who can seize it. Their portraits seem almost to be traced directly from the contours of the face, the slit of the eyelids, the network of the veins as they appear on the surface, and each separate hair. They show us bad and sickly faces, the scars of broken abscesses, chlorosis and the festered ears that belong to this poisoned race of Italian bigots. D'Aubigné, more passionate but less cruel, must have got the feeling of these effigies, even as Brantôme must have known the sly faces and the quaint grace of Corneille de Lyon—one of the best qualified of his time to notice the pervasiveness and the furtiveness of life and to seize its spirit in the light of the eyes and the smile of the mouth; Corneille de Lyon, setting his people against blue or green backgrounds,

follows the same processes as the writers. These artists are historians above all. We have not known how to use their talent for minuteness, the continuing curves, the pure ovals, the enamel and jewels of their carefully and closely worked pigment, and their hard and tense harmonies. The princes whom they painted with wasplike waists stand before limpid backgrounds

Château de Langeais.

and their horses caparisoned with purple bear the kings to the fields of the cloth of gold; they make us forget the ugliness of their masters by installing them most elaborately in jewel boxes of crystalline fire.

II

How does the soil, which nourishes the sculptors of the cathedrals, which nourishes Foucquet, which nourishes la Fontaine, and which nourishes the brothers Le Nain, which imposed upon the Clouets, though they were of Flemish stock, the precision and the sobriety of

its aspects, after having expressed itself completely in an explosion of love that united a thousand voices of the most homogeneous crowd, the one, perhaps, that is closest to the earth of all that have ever existed—how does it happen that this soil was prevented from reappearing with its own savor, save rarely, during the centuries that followed and in the work of a few isolated

Château de Josselin.

men? Its lack of accent, especially in this region of the Loire, is precisely what gives it a charm which was to envelop and hold those who are born and who live there. Nowhere do the hills follow one another so gently as in France; nowhere are things bathed in a calmer light, as distinct from the crudity of the South as it is from the profound brilliance of the North; nowhere are the waters clearer or the air and the soil lighter. The artists are born there in large numbers; few of them recall their surroundings. Too many men

School of Jean Foucquet. Agnes Sorel. (*Private Collection.*)

are crossing France, situated at the crossroads of the modern world, between Spain, Italy, Germany, the Low Countries, and England, and bathed by the two seas which bring to her the East and the West. Never is she entirely herself, and she is constantly renewing herself. Therein is her weakness—and her strength. There is no hero to take her entirely into his soul, but instead a diffused intelligence which is constantly reborn from her ashes to teach the nations that they all participated in her formation and that she does not cease to act upon their development. It is a people born to be happy, peacefully to live by its own harvests and its own vintages, but condemned to eternal martyrdom because it does not give others time to understand it and because the others do not give it time to realize itself. That is the reason why it was in such haste to build the cathedral. It foresaw that it would no longer, perhaps, be able to bequeath its true image to the future.

Colin d'Amiens. Louis XI.
(*Private Collection.*)

Italy breathed into it a flame which was new, at least,

Portrait of an Unknown Woman. (*Louvre.*)

and, in its declining strength, it had but little more resistance to offer. But the spirit of Burgundy and of Flanders which, in the past, it had awakened, now impressed it in turn. We see Michel Colombe leave the great nave to enter the colored shadow of a chapel and bend over the great theatrical tomb of the Burgundian princes. His desire was to equal its pompous luxury, but that was impossible. Something thin and enervated, a kind of fiery tension toward the idea of the beauty of form, announces the invasion of Italian idealism and, unhappily, of its formulas as well. The façades of a hundred mansions, of a hundred churches, the rood-lofts, the pulpits, the pews, the grating of the choirs, the stained-glass windows, the carved wood, the forged iron, and the ceramics of the period all bear the same imprint. Seduced by so much grace, France is about to surrender herself.

Michel Colombe. Tomb of Francis II of Brittany, detail. (*Cathedral of Nantes.*)

For a long time Avignon had arrested the transalpine spirit in its course, which preferred to mount through the valley of the Rhône to mingle with Burgundy and with Flanders and so avoid the territories that had

been ruined by war. Beginning with the first half of the fourteenth century, with the popes, Italy had made the moral conquest of Provence, already well prepared to receive her through the ancient Greco-Latin memories of the land and the tradition of love that had never ceased to reign there. Giotto barely missed coming to Avignon. In that city Petrarch had demanded the portrait of Laura from the great Simone Martini, who had come to cover with noble frescoes the halls of

MAGDALEN. (*Tomb of the Abbaye of Solesmes.*)

the palace of the popes. Unknown Frenchmen work there with him and after him. Within the majestic fortress the walls disappeared under the painted forests that were traversed by huntsmen, that were peopled with birds, and tapestried with fresh moss in which one

feels the quiver of the springs of living water. Even after the departure of the pontifical court, the city remained the meeting place for the civilization of the South and the civilization of the North. The proximity of the court of Aix where good King René, himself an illuminator, surrounded himself with image makers, with painters, with troubadours and minstrels, could not do otherwise than quicken the hearth of spirited culture which a century of peaceful activity had created there. Nicolas Froment, working there with him in the cool shadow of the cloisters and of the heavy castles, is the van Eyck of Avignon, because of his grave portraits which he hollowed out and which have the explosive violence of the South, and because of his dry landscapes which, even so, are burning with light and in which the orange trees grow; and many Burgundian artists, who had lost their employment upon the arrival of the Flemings, left Dijon for the valley of the Rhône. Enguerrand Charonton brought to it, from Laon, with the science and the color which he got from the Flemish painters, the clean workmanship and the health of the men of Champagne. Here, then, was the vibrant crucible of Italian force in which the materiality and the density of the painting of the North came to amalgamate itself with the acuteness of observation and the sobriety of the French! In the silent profundity of its browns, its reds, and its greens that turn almost to black as they undulate against the abstract background all of gold with distant spires and domes, in the tragic swaying of the great bodies that bend over the bare corpse, in this corpse itself, pure and carved out like an idea, the great "Pietà" of Avignon is one of the summits of the harmony. Outside of Italy and of Flanders, where everything, at that hour, was singing

like an orchestra in the great silence of France, it is now like the sound of a violoncello arising alone above the tombs.

Whatever the misery of France in the fifteenth century, the hearth from which that work came could not

THE MASTER OF MOULINS. The Nativity. (*Episcopal Palace of Autun.*)

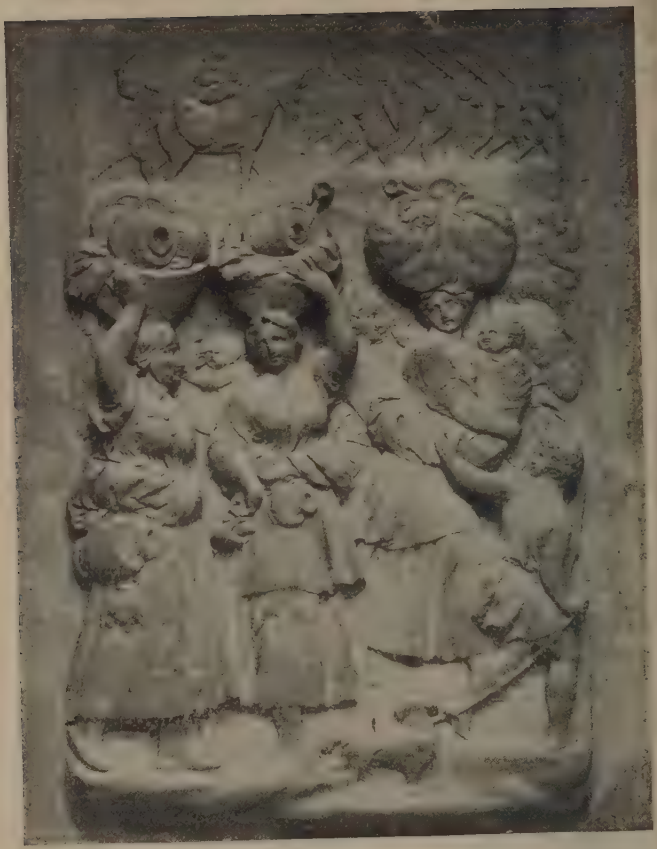
fail to cast some gleams into the imaginations of the artists from its provinces of the North. Even before the Gothic period, moreover, Italy had reacted upon them and the Romanesque was only an application of the essential principle of Roman architecture mingling with Eastern and Northern influences. The image makers, the master builders, and the glass makers of France were traveling about. There was an exchange of manuscripts, of furniture, of armor, and of wrought

iron and copper. But these were surface influences and the powerful life of the people assimilated them without knowing it. It needed the great military expedition of the end of the fifteenth century entirely to burst the dike formed by Avignon. Charles VIII brought back Italy in the train of his armies.

III

The French monarchy could not refuse an ardent sympathy to Italian art. Ruined by a hundred years of wars, the guide of men whom that terrible period had caused to forget their own civilization, the monarchy was all the more dazzled by the treasures heaped up in the Lombard or Tuscan cities because Italian art, at this time, was beginning to become exterior, to apply itself more and more to the decoration of the palaces of a middle class that had grown rich, and of the chapels of the restored papacy. Money was coming back into the coffers of the French kings, peace was returning to the countryside; coming back to his France, and finding it benumbed, with its old springs dried up and its new springs not yet above ground, it was very natural that the king, in order to restore his castles, to build and decorate them, should think of bringing back with him some of those artists whose fecundity, whose facility, and whose nervous and abundant animation enchant him. Fra Giocondo, the architect, follows Louis XII to France. Francis I summons da Vinci, Benvenuto, Andrea del Sarto, and later Rosso and Primaticcio. Michael Angelo is foreshadowed.

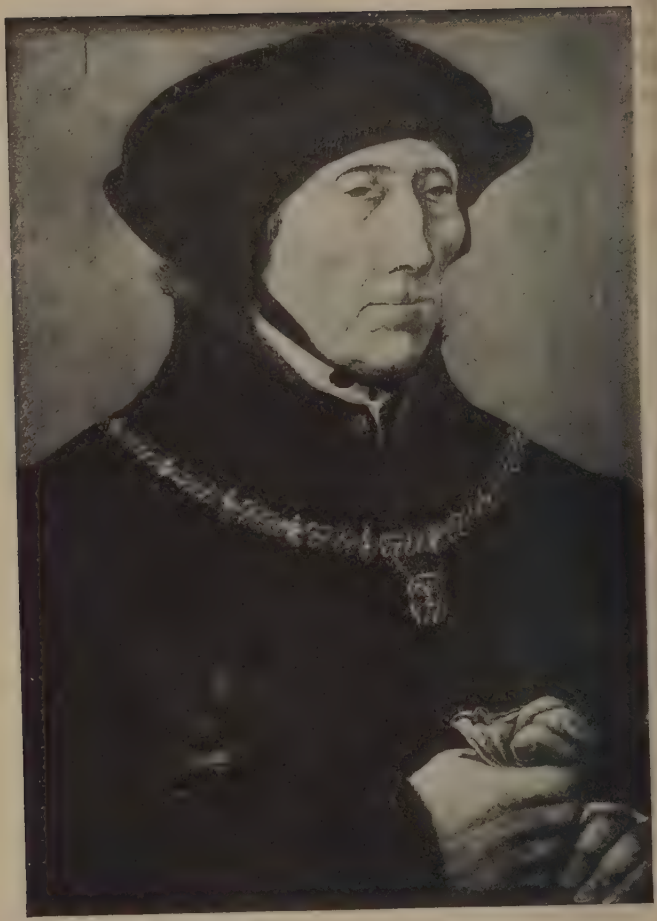
The Loire, which the Valois had not yet abandoned after the fifty years in which they had grown accustomed to the life there, was to be the first halting place of these artists in their northward march. During the



PIERRE BONTEMS. Tomb of Francis I, detail. (*Basilica of St. Denis.*)

whole war, it had been considered by the English and the French as the key to the territory. The lands which it waters are the face of France. In its course it unites the valley of the Rhône and the Central Plateau with Brittany, while the tributaries of its right bank connect it with the basin of the Seine and the tributaries of its left bank with the basin of the Garonne. One might say that all these long rivers bring to it in their waters the fat lands of the North, the thin lands of the South, and the great rain clouds which have been mirrored in their sources. The oak, the chestnut, the poplar, the willow, the grasslands, and the reeds all meet here. The "garden of France" is born and reborn continually among these great tranquil waters, their soft curves between the banks of sand and the leafy shores, and the flooded fields from which clumps of trees emerge. The French princes chose these great landscapes, abundant and pleasant, as places where they might forget the sufferings they had undergone in the preceding century and flee the responsibility for the

JEAN CLOUET. A daughter of Francis I (?). (*Private Collection.*)



JEAN CLOUET. Guillaume de Montmorency. (*Lyons Museum.*)

sufferings of their own century. The château built for pleasure succeeded the stronghold. It was still surrounded by great sleepy moats, it was sometimes built on rivers, but that was rather to have the murmur and the coolness of the waters than to protect it against the enemy from within or without. In the beginning, the new world indicates its character but slightly by the windows which open in the stone of the bare façades among the great pepper-box towers and which open upon the gardens. We have not yet seen the end of the austerity of the military edifices whose loopholes and battlements, through which boiling oil had flowed, animated the contour of the wall. Behind their thick masonry was the wealth accumulated by five generations of feudal lords, the deep coffers, the chests, the high-backed chairs, the sideboards whose wood is carved into flames, and the enormous profusion of flowers sown in the tapestries that are flooded with blacks and reds, but have the sober and powerful arrangement which Beauvais reserves for the seigneur; this confused mass of embroideries, goldwork, and carving will have to feel stifled and in need of room within the walls, and men will have to feel the desire to parade the vanity that comes with the acquisition of fortune before the façades break into flower, before the windows frame themselves with ornaments and cap themselves with pinnacled cornices, before the new architecture of the nobility shall appear in the space of a few years.

What is called French Renaissance architecture, that unprecise mixture of styles which, despite all, becomes a style, develops out of the multiple influences of the military construction, of the feudal centuries, of Gothic ornamentation, and of the counterfeit Greco-Roman art

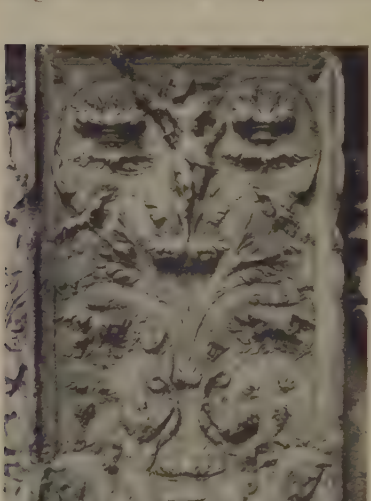
devised by the Italians—the whole being erected at the edge of waters or in the vicinity of woods. In this style the essential architectural principle which the men of the twelfth century had seized in a flash, and which is to think first of the destination of the building, is absent, or at least the destination of the château is so secondary in importance, so temporary and superficial a matter, that it quite masks this architectural principle. The necessity for adapting the organ to the function demanded of it had compelled the master builders to use the simple forms which caused harmony to burst forth from the interior of the body of the edifice itself and to flood the exterior. Even during the death struggle of Gothic construction, the ornament is so much a part of the building that it is the building itself turning, little by little, into a bare skeleton, hollowed out, even to its bones, to permit the entrance of the light. The Renaissance, on the contrary, thinks first of charming through the surface, of covering, with a gorgeous mantle, the body devoid of its skeleton, its muscles, and its blood. And all modern architecture has resulted from this error, which will be perpetuated until the day when new social needs will call for other organs.

JUDITH. (*Caen.*)

The ornamentation is of a time when analysis has

JEAN CLOUET. Jeanne d'Albret. (*Private Collection.*)

begun, when the glass maker, the sculptor, and the painter all work for themselves, when a thousand influences, which the architect knows only too well, turn a single man into a dispersed multitude, whereas three centuries before an ignorant multitude acted like a single man. When fallen Italy has completely subdued the spirit of the builders, they so far abandon themselves to the decorative orgy that they turn even toward the Gothic artists, against whom they had intended to react, that they may seek instructions from them. And when these façades are not complicated by colonnades, by loggias, tribunes, galleries of arcades, and all the complicated display of the new Italian decorators, the slate roofs, the great sloping roofs that undulate to the very cornices, are crushed under a wearisome forest of pinnacles, of steeples, of lanterns, of carved chimneys, and of monumental windows. There is a meager stylization, enervated and impoverished, of the old Gothic designs of foliage that was so full of the juices and the



Choir Stall. Detail.
(*Cathedral of Limoges.*)

François Clouet. Portrait presumed to be that of the artist, drawing. (*Louvre.*)

odors of the earth; there is an infinitely varied but infinitely monotonous combination of coiling stems, vases, shellwork, animals, flowers, and human forms which try to hide their misery through their abundance, and lose their breath in so doing. The last flicker of the Gothic passion has become a cold, exhausting, and forced debauch, a disappointing chase after a lost illusion—the saddest thing in the world, a great love that is dying and that is unwilling to admit it to itself. However, after fifty years of this French criticism, which alone was capable of recreating in the better minds a kind of intellectual enthusiasm which almost replaces instinct, the energy of Pierre Lescot and of Philibert Delorme will assure to the edifices which they construct a powerful skeleton; it arises from amid the accumulation of the materials with which they have to deal and which maintains its balance behind the stiff and sumptuous shell of the round or flat columns and of the Corinthian efflorescences, of the great corniced windows, of the bas-reliefs, and of the statues which frame them. And since the giving way of the too lofty vaults of Beauvais, French art was to know, in the Louvre, its first moment of hope.

IV

In it there already awakens the need for an architectural system; it comes with force, but a force surrounded by that proud grace and by that sense of a nature made aristocratic with which the artists of that time delighted the feudal lords who had lost the coarseness of former times. The architectural system needed is one which shall tend to anticipate that agreement with the commands of the monarchical dogma, an agreement which is to be realized a century later.

In Paris, Catherine reigns and Diane is forgotten. The architect restrains his fantasy and concentrates it upon erecting, in the center of the city, the house symbolic of the autocracy. He is no longer in the heart of the woods, he has no longer to build the great hunting

Ligier Richier. Fragment of a monument. (*Louvre.*)

castle where the king, amid the gallantry of his court, comes to rest from war by hunting the stag and the boar, where he and the beautiful women about him direct the course of religion and diplomacy. The architect no longer follows Francis I, going from the verdant parks of the Loire, where the abundance of tranquil waters soothes the fatigue of his flesh, to the deep forests of the Île de France, where his gross, carnal sensuality appeases itself in bloodshed. In these animated solitudes, if the architect had lost the sense of the need

of the people which makes great architecture, the painter and the sculptor felt the rise in themselves of creative elements, the power of which only the pagan world had known. When one wanders the lengths of the mysterious avenues which stretch away beneath the sunny trees; when one listens to the sound of hunters' horns, to the calls, the gallops, and the flights under the branches growing faint in the distance; when, under the shade of an oak, one reads the poems of Ronsard, scented with boxwood and with laurel—it seems as if furtive apparitions of bare breasts and haunches were animating the bed of the peaceful waters where sail the black and white swans. Primaticcio, after Rosso, had brought from Mantua, to decorate Fontainebleau, the enormous and abundant knowledge of his master, Giulio Romano, who had been trained in the Farnesine and in whom the admirable grace of Raphael was stifling under the bestial sensuality that had been loosed, and under which the Italy of the sixteenth century suddenly foundered, after the prophets of the Sistine had made their voices heard. Both artists had met the nymphs of the French forests. Rosso, in order to recover them, disrobed the royal favorites who, like them, wore a crescent in their blond hair. Primaticcio carried them in disorder into the great waxed and gilded halls, audaciously extended their long, wavelike forms amid the golden frames of the mirrors, and set great herculean bodies beside the monumental fireplaces and the windows; with the flowering breasts, the full haunches, and the moving hips of the nymphs he grouped fruits, wheat, grapes, and vegetables which were brought from the fields and the trellises for the table of the king. A worldly Olympus installed itself at the edge of the motionless pools which at times, in

School of Clouet. Portrait of an unknown man. (*Louvre.*)

the evenings, when the hunter's call resounded, were purpled by torches and by blood.

It is into this atmosphere, drunk with sensuality and with the open air, that all the artists were to enter, when once the increasing glory of the monarchy had swept them into its orbit. Among all of them, one feels Ronsard again, the odor of the woods, the breath that issues from cool caves, a murmur of running waters, and the nude women in whom the poet of the gardens saw beautiful columns entwined with grape vine and ivy. It is as exiles from their true century that these artists appear, apart from the multitude, apart from its needs, its sufferings, and the spirit that stirred it. Nowhere do we find Montaigne, save at times with the Clouets. Nowhere do we find Rabelais save in the valiant and savory humor of the good sculptor, Pierre Bontems. There is no echo of the horrible religious wars, no odor of the fagots that burn flesh and books. The Protestant artists themselves have not all felt the passing of Calvin. Perhaps even so, is there not a little of his stark nature in the tombs of Barthélémy Prieur? And doubtless it is his dry vigor and his anguish that Ligier Richier is bringing back when he sets up on a pedestal a decomposing corpse offering its heart to heaven or when he assembles around the dead Christ a harsh and thin group of weeping women and of the men who bear the body. But Jean Goujon, the greatest of them all, has not set foot in the country. He is a Huguenot, but more pure and more gentle than austere; he wanders from the Loire to Fontainebleau, never averting his eyes from the wheatfields and the waters that are silvered by the breath of the wind.

There is nothing more French among us than this man who yet has nothing of our easy good nature nor

our bantering common sense, who owes to the Italians his education as an artist, and who is like a bond of union between France exiled in Italy with Giovanni da Bologna and Italy exiled in France with Primaticcio and Rosso. He is of that lyricism of France which very

PRIMATICCIO. Drawing. (*Louvre.*)

rarely appears alone, but whose flame arises as soon as Latin or Germanic lyricism has passed through the air near it. He is the impalpable idea which, from one end of this soil to the other, bends the harvests and the grasses with the wind. Whatever the material he works in, bronze or marble, statue or medallion, bas-relief or full round, he brings into sculpture, not the *processes* of painting as do the sculptors of the inferior periods, but a spirit which is not of painting, not even of music, that invisible fluid which passes with the winds, the

CORNEILLE DE LYON. Portrait. (*Chantilly.*)

perfumes, and the sonorous murmurs, through the air, the silence, and the waters; into his work he carries the whole of that diffused substance which floats restlessly in arrested forms—and even when the form stands alone and when around it there is neither air, nor silence, nor waters.

Have you seen how one of Jean Goujon's faces smiles over a bare shoulder, how a young breast blooms in the

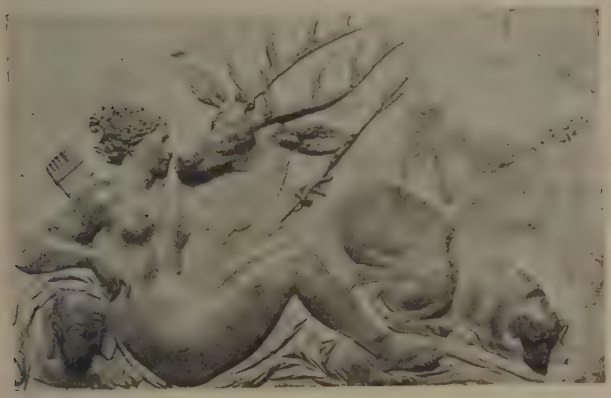
JEAN GOUJON. Tritons and Nereids of the Seine. (*Louvre.*)

angle made by a bending arm? Have you seen the wave that runs through these limbs, these hard, arched feet, the high calves of the legs, the long thighs, all the slender roundnesses that hide muscles of iron, the great forms that are made for leaping in the forest in pursuit of the deer or to flee "like a trembling faun" when the royal huntsman crosses its path? From them comes forth an odor of watery moss, a breath of the damp forest. Those beautiful, pure arms which flow from the shoulders are a liquid column issuing from an urn; those torsos turn upon the haunches with the fluidity of the tides that meet and mingle before surrendering themselves to the same current; those draperies stirred by the breeze form lines like those on the surface of the water; there is a sound of springs and of fountains, of

JEAN GOUJON. Charity. (*Château d'Anet.*)

the lazy undulation of the willows, of the murmur of the poplars; one sees the long curves of the rivers of France and the silver gleam they make among the reeds and the water plants.

Truly, from Rosso and from Primaticcio to Jean Goujon, and especially with Goujon, there was in this



JEAN GOUJON (or School of). Diana the Huntress. (*Cluny Museum.*)

art of the glades, of the ponds, and of the forests, this art of statues and of columns half seen behind a wall of branches, a most admirable sentiment of the feminine body amid nature. This sentiment was to decline very quickly in the measure that monarchical absolutism increased, but it could not fail to assert itself with the passionate vigor of a springtime both on the morrow of the nameless sufferings lived through by the people of France, and in the hope of a resurrection held out to the people by the young and beauty-loving royal family that fled from the devastated cities to take possession of itself. The art of an aristocracy, the art of a caste

JEAN GOUJON. Fountain of the Innocents, bas-reliefs. (*Paris.*)

even, but superior to its function because it sprang like a young shoot from an old tree and because, in a language different from that spoken by the men who lived in the fever of the time—Rabelais, d'Aubigné, the reformers, the printers, the booksellers, and the inventors—it affirmed the invincible vitality of a race that had been crushed to earth by more than a hundred years of sorrow and misery. If the violent fervency of belief in the future, the characteristic of this century, is not felt in the work of Jean Goujon, he, more than any of the others, possesses its humanity, its profound and sacred tenderness for everything that represents the forces of to-morrow. Have we sufficiently noted that these poets of woman were also the poets of childhood? Have we sufficiently noted that the Gothic men, in the strength and in the hardihood of their life, had felt but little of the glory of the child which sprang from the mother's womb as a manifestation of their vigor, too facile and too frequent for them to think of representing it? Have we sufficiently noted that their love goes out to the woman as a mother, that it is the hips, one higher than the other, and her arm wearied by the weight that it carries, which aroused their tenderness rather than the child itself, which is almost always inexpressive and commonplace as it rests upon that arm?

The Italians alone, from the time of their old masters, from Giovanni Pisano, Jacopo della Quercia, and especially Donatello and the della Robbias, had bent attentively over childhood. The idealistic peoples are too much attached to the beauty perceived through the senses not to desire it wherever it is to be found; they are so thoroughly concerned with the future that they cannot fail to perceive it in the being who bears its

secret within him. Is it their influence or is it rather the awakening of French individualism, the desire for general investigation, which seizes upon the western world in the sixteenth century? But Jean Goujon sud-

GERMAIN PILON. Tomb of René Birague, detail. (*Louvre.*)

denly perceives the beauty of childhood, of childhood delicate and plump; and Germain Pilon, the learned sculptor, who seems scarcely to think of anything except how he may prove that he knows his trade of cutting in stone the faithful portraits of his kings or of setting up around funeral urns or extending upon tombs his beautiful forms, bare and full, feels the mystery of a

childish face with a great swelling curve of the forehead, the exaggerated smallness of the nose, the exaggerated protrusion of the lips and cheeks, the delicious hesitation that makes all the features so unprecise; and Ligier Richier himself flees from his visions of hell and death as soon as there is a chance to model a skull as round as a ball and the fat, trembling mass, divine and fragile, of the flesh of a child swelling with blood and with milk. And thus we catch a glimpse of one of the faces of this time when the hope in the life of the world was sprouting amid the bruised flesh and the deadly vapors.

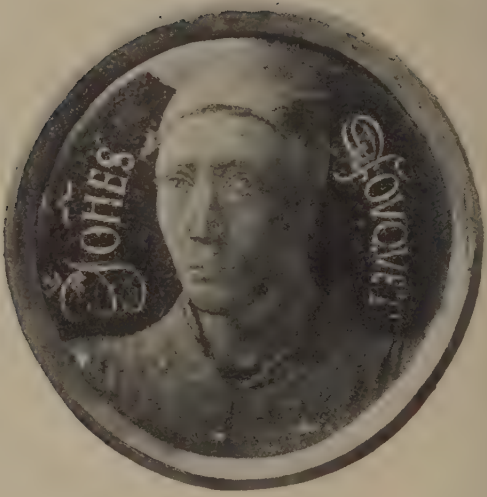
LAGNEAU. A prelate, drawing. (*École des Beaux-Arts.*)

The end of the Italian wars, the end of the civil wars, and the definitive triumph of the monarchy which had been active and fighting constantly despite its moral decomposition and its luxury, were to take away the especial accent of French art which had been revived by Roman influence and by contact with the woods and

the rivers. The king installs himself in the Louvre of Pierre Lescot and of Chambiges. The artist who follows him thither reads Malherbe instead of Ronsard; the streets of Paris and the words of Rabelais seem very coarse to him after having seen the palaces of Rome and of Venice, the Sistine of Michael Angelo, and the *Stanze* of Raphael. The fall will be as rapid as the rise was vigorous, and the artists who will mark the passage from the free invasion of Italian genius to the imposing dogmatism of the century of Louis XIV may rather be called witnesses of that passage than factors in it. Bernard Palissy and Jean Cousin are merely workmen in art. That which impresses us with the first man is that he has that human faith which made his century so powerful in western Europe. The second—painter, sculptor, glass maker, and geometrician—is scarcely more than the caricature of the universalist Italians, which the time demanded. Fréminet, the official artist, is a Michael Angelo of the mountebank's stage—his work is riddled with holes, covered with bumps, and full of wind. The soul of the people is mute. A terrible silence reigns over the work of the wearisome chatterers of literature and painting who, during a third of a century, will mumble the law under the shadow of the throne.

No matter. All that was to be. The Italian Renaissance could not fail to react strongly upon us. Isolation kills. Peoples, like men, cannot live within themselves eternally. They have to penetrate one another in order to seek resources which their contacts with unknown imaginations and sensibilities will reveal. After these encounters there is almost always a partial receding, but a profound work is going on, an invisible march toward further realizations which will be the more vast

and complex the greater the number of elements which have come to take part in them. Whether we will it or not, we must, in our battle for the ideas of the future, rely on the spirit that Renaissance Italy brought into us quite as much as on the popular strength which, in the Middle Ages, brought forth a thousand naves and two thousand towers



Portrait of Foucquet, enamel. (*Louvre.*)

NUREMBERG

Chapter VI. GERMANY AND THE REFORMATION

I

IF the Renaissance defines the manner of understanding and of expressing life for which the Italian artists gave the formula, it is even more difficult in Germany than in Flanders to connect with it the movement which, beginning at the end of the fourteenth century, carries all minds along with it. If the Renaissance is the affirmation of a new ideal, which demands the submission of those conquests of intuition and of faith now compromised to the double test of experience and of reason, we must recognize it in the North as well as in the South. And also, everywhere—except in France where the creative originality of the people had manifested itself two centuries earlier—there is the victorious revival of the national temperament opposing

its tendencies and its methods to the attempt of the church to reduce things to a single level. The German workman, taught by the mason and the image maker of France, dazzled by the painter of the Low Countries, and conquered by the Italian draftsman and fresco painter, arrives by degrees at a consciousness of his gifts and of the needs of his race at about the same time that Flanders and Italy are defining their qualities and their desires. Each one seizes the tool that suits his hand.

Mary Magdalen. Wood, detail. (XVth century.) (*Cluny Museum.*)

The Gothic art which France was forgetting, which Italy was rejecting, and which Flanders was slowly transforming so that she might attempt, with Breughel as later she would with Rubens, to find her accord with the thought of the South, continued to live much longer in Germany than anywhere else. In the seventeenth century it had not disappeared from Hildesheim. It was the Germans alone who developed its most important features, continuing to work in its ruins with an assiduity which prevented them from perceiving the enormous advance made by the adventurous mind of

the Italians and the French. It is not astonishing that for so long a time it was believed that Gothic art was of German stock. The architects, painters, and sculptors of Germany had, little by little, taken possession of everything which, in the immense treasury of forms

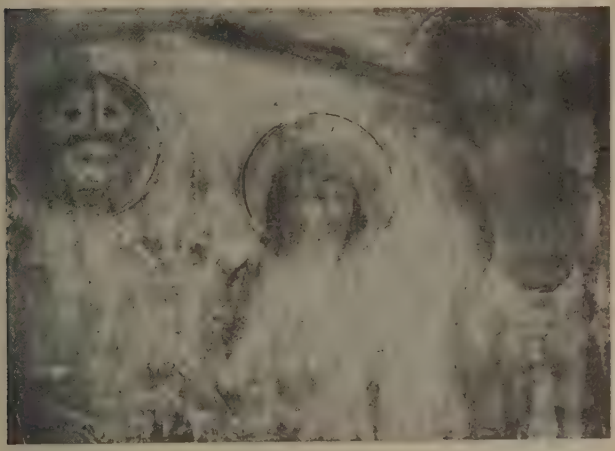
STEPHAN LOCHNER. Adoration of the Magi.
(*Cologne Cathedral.*)

and ideas accumulated by the French artists in less than two centuries, could develop and flatter their nature. They rapidly lost sight of the profound principle of ogival architecture. And as it was very complex in its apparent simplicity, as it was very rich in lines harmonized to produce an effect of ensemble, very rich in ornaments to conceal or to accentuate the thousand organs which were necessary to its general function,

they strove to complicate these lines and to multiply these ornaments, thus following the tendency toward minutiæ which is a characteristic of their mind. The new architectural forms which came from France and Italy toward the end of the fifteenth century could not fail, with their false decorations, to confuse still further the erudition of the builders on the right bank of the Rhine. There came to pass even this thing: that while many Italians and Frenchmen were deciding wholly to divorce architecture and the arts of ornamentation and were expressing themselves directly through sculpture and painting, the majority of the Germans obstinately persisted in placing together, in inextricable disorder, all the separate elements of the symphony of the people whose echoes had been scattered by the Frenchmen of the thirteenth century over the whole Occident and to the very gates of Asia.

The art of the sculptured and painted altar screens with which, since the fourteenth century, Germany had been encumbering her churches, was developed in this confusion. These coarse works, which display, with a patience which nothing could disturb, the scenes of the Passion in an orgy of awkward forms, of contorted attitudes, of grimacing faces, of crosses, spears, sponges, crowns of thorns, nails, and hammers, furnished inexhaustible nutriment for the popular industry of wood carving which has always been carried on by the peasants of Tyrol, the Harz, the Black Forest, the Alps, Franconia, and all the German mountains and valleys where the larch and the pine grow. These woods yield a soft material in which the knife works easily, going back over its grooves, spreading them out in every direction, making deep hollows under hair or fur, under the folds of cloths and under curling locks, and working

out the veins of hands and the wrinkles of faces; and so men pass their winter evenings, spare themselves the boredom of long watches, forget the solitude of the heights and the pasture lands, and bring incident into the monotony of the inner life which could not be satis-



CHRIST ON THE CROSS AND MARY. Fresco. (End of the XVth century.) (*Church of St. Severin, Cologne.*)

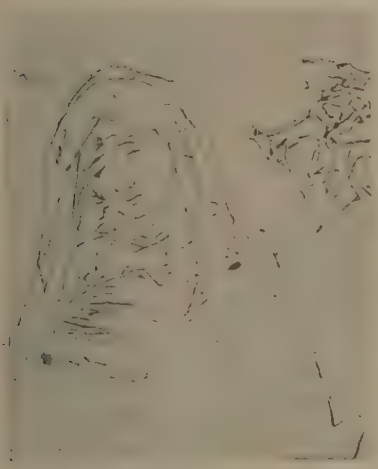
fied by too bare a plane or too pure an outline. When the man of the mountains and the woods approaches the cities, he will see the spires standing like lacework against the sky. He will walk about in the crooked streets which are overhung by the triangular façades embroidered with painted woods and with gilt inscriptions, where the immense tile roofs descend quite close to the ground, where the overdecorated cornices rise in steps amid the pointed gables, the chimneys, the stork's nests, and the warriors of gold unfurling the

inscriptions on their pennants. He will dip up his water from gaudily painted fountains, whose openwork pyramids are encumbered with sentimental or grotesque statues and with unexpected mechanisms. And when, in the workshop or in the booth, he comes upon the

Master of the Life of Mary. Birth of the Virgin
(*Alte Pinakothek, Munich.*)

careful production of the good workmen in ivory and in metal, of the ironworkers, or the goldsmiths who lean over their dark benches, he will not rest until he himself has wrought some complicated thing in which will live again, in an order difficult to justify and impossible to define, the disordered sensations that he has collected in his travels. The churches, already overfilled with altar screens, pulpits, rood-lofts, tombs erected against the walls, and red and blue coats of arms weighted

down under plumed helmets, will see their oak pews perforated like sponges under the chisel of the wood carver, while enormous tabernacles obstruct the perspectives and add to the unfortunate effect of the supplementary ribbing through the tangled lines of their spindles and their points. The Tyrolese Michel Pacher and old Syrlin at Ulm open the road. They will give birth to legions of artisans, skillful at cutting wood into long, slender colonnades, in embroidering it, in turning it into guipure, in combining real faces illustrative of the Scriptures with the minutely crossed bars of railings, of spirals, of crowns of thorns, and tufts of thistles. The houses of the guilds, the breweries, and the city halls painted within and without with red, gold, and blue, arise at the same time from the pavement of the commercial cities, amid the hovels with their framework of brown wood, to give to the joiners, to the blacksmiths, to the image makers, and the glassworkers of Germany the opportunity to exercise their slow, nearsighted, tireless, and specialized industry. A swarming legion of dwarfs, of gnomes, and of kobolds take by



MARTIN SCHOENGAUER. Mater Dolorosa, sketch. (*Louvre.*)

assault the beams and the carved furniture. The picturesque cities will be a museum of painted wood, in which not one bare edifice, not one straight line or pure curve, not one spot indicative of clearness and simplicity, will break the monotony. The alchemist, who handles his retorts or unrolls his parchments behind the green windowpanes set in leaden hexagons, will find again, upon crossing his threshold, all their tortured forms and the color of their illuminations in the frescoes which, among the Gothic ornaments, cover the façades of the Rathaus. It is an old, open book, corroded by the humidity of the street. In it one sees the unrolling of the cloths, of the banners, and of the plumes; one sees the useless volutes and the obstruction of the profuse, encroaching detail which make of German engraving, so rich and so patiently worked, the least authentic of works of art, but the most accomplished of the works of science, in their conscientiousness and their labor.

II

In reality, German painting will never extricate itself from the original crafts which the artisans of the Middle Ages practiced side by side in the same workshops. The work in copper and bronze and the wood carvings are to be found again in the loftiest creations of Dürer and even of Holbein. There never was a better engraver on copper than Dürer, or a better engraver on wood than Holbein, and Holbein, though he is the only one of the German artists who did not remain a workman, never abandoned his wood block. In Germany, probably at the same time as in the Low Countries—at the beginning of the fifteenth century—engraving on wood appeared. The Florentine Finiguerra did no more than

House at Hildesheim.

systematize, somewhat later, the German invention of engraving on metal. Leblond who, in the eighteenth century will discover engraving in colors, was of German descent, and Senefelder, the inventor of lithography, was a Bavarian. Printing, watch making, mechanics, and plastics all come out of the same black crucible into which the indefatigable mind of Germany was casting pellmell and indiscriminately the raw material of the industries it found immediately necessary. With the German, the tool tyrannizes over the artist, who follows it. With the Frenchmen or the Italian, the intelligence moves too quickly to give time for the tool to loiter over detail. If, in France and in Italy, the scientists are united with the artists in the same tendencies toward generalization and abstraction, it is in the processes of the craft and in application to their tasks that they join each other here.

The work is like that of a swarm of ants; it is the same with all the crafts and in all the cities, and this universal and diffuse character of German painting renders its development difficult to follow and obscures its origin. Unlike that of other countries, it does not follow a logically and regularly ascending line to reach a summit and then descend little by little; it advances by hesitating steps, in broken lines that cross one another, losing itself in inextricable meanderings, and sometimes moving backward; and when it seems ready to become conscious of itself, it suddenly stops forever. Its confused character corresponds with the confusion of mind, with the confusion of history and the confused and chaotic partitioning of the German soil. Intellectual centers light up everywhere, only to be extinguished by the breath of a war or a revolt or even without any reason, in many cases. There are none of those

broad movements which do not halt until their powerful avidity has exhausted the life that they contained. Prague, in the fourteenth century, has its school, which will be completely ruined by the atrocious war of the Hussites. Ulm, the prettiest city in Germany, with its painted houses, its colored shutters, its appetizing freshness, and its Rathaus, brilliant with paintings, has its school with Syrlin, with Multscher, and with Zeitbloom, until its activity is absorbed by the growth of Nuremberg. Holbein the Elder will found, at Augsburg, the school which his son will transport to Basel and which his pupil, Burgkmair, will carry on painfully until his death. Riemenschneider, the sculptor, will work at Würzburg, while Cranach, the painter, will be the Saxon school all by himself. Hamburg had its local artists, which the decrepitude of the Hansa was very soon to discourage. Conrad Witz, a delicate landscapist, works at Constance. Colmar is contained entire in Martin Schoengauer. If Cologne continues longer, if indeed it

MEISTER WILHELM. The Virgin and Child. (*Cologne Museum.*)

MASTER OF ST. SEVERIN. Portrait.
(*Peltzen Collection, Cologne.*)

has the fortune to bring to Flanders—to Bruges in particular—a very large part of its initiation into plastics, a singular destiny wills that the city shall not escape from the narrowest primitivism save when it receives from Bruges itself such counsels as will cause the ruin and death of its precocious debility.

At no other place, not in Egypt nor in the France or the Italy of the Middle Ages, did the theologians and

Suabian School. St. Catherine. (*Berlin Museum.*)

the doctors have a greater influence on the painters. Everywhere else the same profound power, arising out of the highest needs of human nature, impelled the philosopher and the artist with the same movement and in the same direction. Here, on the contrary, in the land of the scholiasts, in the heart of the devout and stupidly pedantic city which tried to plant Catholicism in the North, the artist is only a timid, obedient, and ignorant auxiliary of the abstractor of quintessences who holds him by the skin of the neck. From Wilhelm

PETER VISCHER.
King Arthur, bronze.
(*Cathedral of Innsbruck.*)

von Erle to Stephan Lochner, the anonymous artists of the fourteenth century are more like bigoted women than like pious men. Never does one discover in them even a tendency to express those passionate aspirations toward an increasingly ardent communion with the universal spirit which gives to the masters of Siena, for example, a strength so mysterious, so feverish, and with so marked an accent. Instead we see poor men riveted to the letter of the law, dull brains fed on complicated stories. When Lochner appears, about the time when van Eyck and van der Weyden in Flanders, della Quercia, Masaccio, Donatello, Angelico, and Bellini in Italy, and the painters of Avignon in France were affirming with so much energy the right of the individual to maintain his own activity, a little of the theological night seems to be dissipated for a time. In spite of the waxy quality of his paint, Stephan Lochner knows

how to detach from his golden heaven the pretty figures of the virgins with the long hands and the clear skin, a pious and gentle company which is bored by the complicated speculations and which decides delicately to enjoy the bourgeois comfort that the long-continued activity of the city begins to assure to it. His hell is only comic and his paradise a promise. When the pupils of the great Roger van der Weyden come, toward the end of the fifteenth century, bringing with them the bursting power and the full, heavy order of the painters of Bruges, Cologne will be too satiated and woe-begone to resist them. The candid soul of the Master of St. Severin and the delicate timidity and the attenuated color of the Master of the Life of Mary will disappear from the pictures of the last painters of the city as their ashen landscapes are effaced from the memory. Bartholomäus Bruyn, after Joos von Cleve, will indeed try, in the full tide of the sixteenth century, with cold attention, with irreproachable care, and with closely applied science to imagine a compromise, tinged with Italianism, between the primitive expression of Flanders and

HOLBEIN THE ELDER. Young girl, drawing. (*Louvre.*)

of the Rhine. Exposed for so long a time on that great river to the influences of France and of the Low Countries, influences that had been too continuous and not sufficiently balanced, the strength of Germany withdraws more to the east and to the south, toward the interior of the continent where it will touch the old Germanic soil and so acquire once more the consciousness of its true significance.

Nuremberg was well situated for gathering up the currents necessary to the awakening of new desires. It served as a point of contact between the Hanseatic cities, Venice, the Rhine, and the Low Countries. All of Germany, with Burgundy, Hungary, and, by way of the Adriatic and the Danube, the Orient, gravitated toward her. A seething life animated her markets, her counters, and her banks, rolled through her narrow streets, rose from her black stalls with the strong voices of Hans Sachs and his friends, and gave to the guilds of her craftsmen that sweeping power which, two centuries before, had made a chorus of poets of the French masons. Through the ardor that united into a single block all who worked at the same bench, and through the feverish curiosity that tormented everyone of them, the spirit of the Middle Ages and the spirit of the Renaissance burned together in a confused ensemble. All the workers in art of southern Germany left their wooden villages, where the torrents leap between the houses with the flowery fronts, to come to Nuremberg and, amid the sound of the hammers and the humming of the forges, they cast the images of bronze, cast the type of the printers, chased copper and silver, worked in wood, twisted and painted the iron, and toothed and polished the steel of the watches. There we find the meeting-place of men like Adam Krafft, the stone cutter

who showed the very character of the German workman when he made his rude and good effigy kneel so that it might bear upon its shoulders a carved pyramid sixty feet in height, and Veit Stoss, the wood carver who, with his sentimental complications and his meticulous insistence, expressed the character of the German soul with its heavy good-naturedness. They found themselves in the company of the painters of the altar screens who had emigrated from the Rhine cities, and together they stood before the churches decorated by statue makers who owed their education to the artists of the old French images.

III

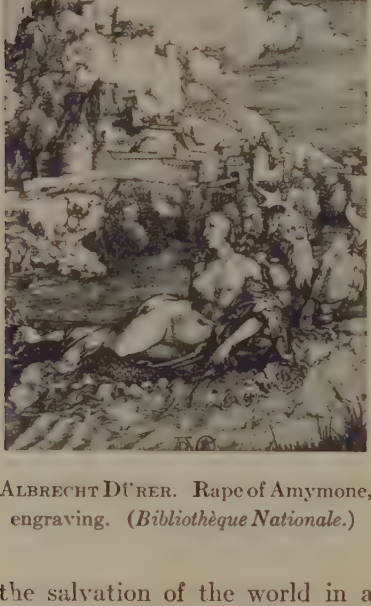
Let us picture to ourselves the youthful Albrecht Dürer amid these surroundings of intense work and complicated activity, in which his old teacher, Wolgemuth, who in Cologne had been deeply impressed with Roger van der Weyden, points out to him, as an example, Pleydenwurff, the man who introduced Flemish painting into Nuremberg. . . . Again let us watch him listening passionately to the tales of the comrades who have come back from Italy, to which he is carried again by the pictures, even when mediocre, of Jacopo de' Barbari, who had come to stay in Nuremberg at about that time. . . . Let us accompany him to the workshop of his father, the goldsmith, where he eagerly studies the engravings of Martin Schoengauer, the master of Colmar, the austere engravings in which we are not spared the spectacle of the wounds of Christ and of the faces of the executioners, scenes whose dramatic force is increased by the ugliness and the misery of the models, by all the bitterness of the wave which represents the Middle Ages as they reach their

ALBRECHT DÜRER. Young girl. *(Berlin Museum.*

end. . . . Let us imagine with what fever this passionate nature, always in love with poetry, music, and dancing, surprised in itself warlike forms riding the clouds; how it caught glimpses of dark pools where water sprites glide on a wave all spangled with gold: how all the land of Germany was swarming with spirits when, with the murmur of the street, there rose to his window the chorus of the Meistersinger. . . . Let us observe how this ardent and meditative sensibility bends back upon itself so that it may take possession of the atavistic forces which the ancient activity of the city, the sap which has accumulated in its soil deposit in the young mind and, mingling with them the wild reverie of the nomads of the Hungarian steppes, that comes to him with the blood of his father. . . . And then we can explain why, in this place and at this time, there was this fruition of mind which, three hundred years before the poets and the musicians of Germany, was to express, in a language more unexpected than theirs, its infinitely complex soul, realistic and sentimental, minutiæ-loving and vague, infantile and apocalyptic—its soul which reflects with uncompromising precision all the images that wander before it and which yet is impossible to seize.

The first among all the Germans, he was an expression, complete and very lofty, of the life and the soil of Germany. In no other place, not in France, not in Flanders, not in Italy itself, is it possible to find a more typical representative of the erudite artist of those times, curious about all things, approaching the study of all things at the same time, and, with unrestrained ardor, heaping up in the same space the results of his researches. His art shows us the confluence and the eddy of two powerfully characterized moments of

activity. He has the faith of the Middle Ages, its confused strength and its rich and obscure symbolism; he has the restlessness of the Renaissance, its sense of the infinite perspectives which open before superior minds, and its indefatigable will to knowledge. Like da Vinci, whom he recalls in so many of his phases, but whose attempt to build up a method was a more lucid one, an ardent curiosity makes him one of those labyrinthian, universal, almost bizarre geniuses before whom all the roads of thought present themselves at the same time. He is a kind of Christ turned scientist who seeks the salvation of the world in an intense study of its aspects.



ALBRECHT DÜRER. Rape of Amymone, engraving. (*Bibliothèque Nationale.*)

Never, and least of all in the engravings which he cut into the copper with the hand of a workman, the heart of a poet, and the brain of a philosopher, never did he arrange nature. He considered it "the only master," and everything in it interested him to the same degree. In the greatest confusion, he saw the Christian myths enacted with German costumes, in German houses and

streets, amid the landscape around Nuremberg, near the waters that flow to the Danube, under rocks of strange form, at the threshold of wooden houses with sloping roofs. In giving form to the complicated and profound reveries which wandered through his meditation, he never placed them outside of the robust plains

ALBRECHT DÜRER. The Mills, drawing. (*Bibliothèque Nationale.*)

of southern Germany, away from the hills covered with larches, away from the pasture lands, the brooks, the pools, and the swaying bridges, never outside the places which he had traversed on his journeys to Italy and to Flanders, the banks of the Rhine striped with rows of vines, the forests, the ravines and the torrents of the Black Forest and Tyrol. With the legends which he gathered up everywhere there was mingled the Orient which he encountered in Venice; there are dragons, chimeras, lions, and camels; there are figures of Turks in Nuremberg households, and knights passing in front

of dungeons all bristling with sentry boxes and towers —death and the devil following close on their heels. With the unwearying patience, if not the rapidity and the schematic decision of the Japanese, with whom he so often betrays an affinity whenever his needle follows the capricious but clear line of his scrupulous landscapes, he pursues to the end a slow and wide research, the result of which he confided impartially to the dull splendor of the copper, to the savory grain of the wood, and to the dry glitter of his painted canvases. The massive horses of Germany, its muscular hunting dogs, its deer, its hares, its cows, its pigs groveling in the mud of the villages, all its insects and all its birds participated, almost always, in the adventures of love, of the family, of the middle classes, and of warriors which the hard point of his engraving tool seized on with the force and the gentleness of a sensibility accessible to all spectacles. Everything aroused his passion and restlessness—the form of the grasses, of the tiny beasts, the moss on the rocks which are split by the patient growth of the roots, human or animal monstrosities, living

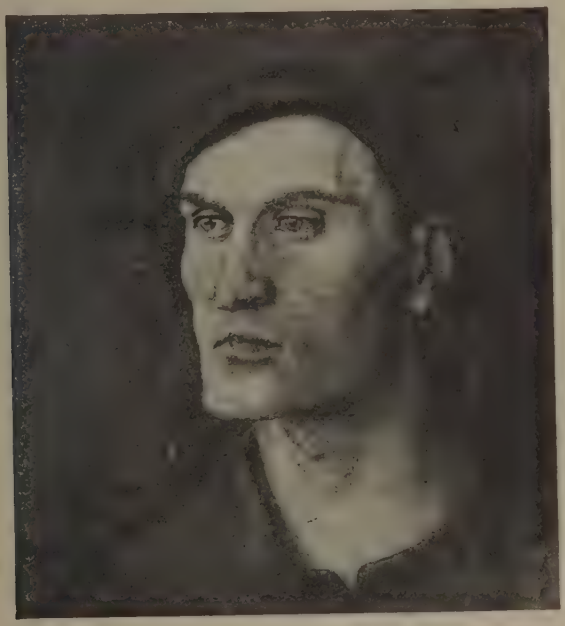
ALBRECHT DÜRER. The Knight and Death, engraving.

ALBRECHT DÜRER. Melancolia, engraving.

things and inert things, the breastplates of forged iron, the weapons, the helmets with their antennæ, and the banners with the coats of arms. He executed decorative designs for goldsmiths, ironworkers, costumers, armorers, printers, and booksellers. He wrote didactic treatises. His universal sympathy neglected nothing of what it judged necessary to the perfecting of his craft and of his mind, neither a bit of dead wood nor a heap of stones, nor the fortuitous manner in which the boundaries of a field were held in place with cords—which was not hidden from him by the great clouds of the sky, the swaying forests, the sight of women heavy with child, or by the mysterious harmony of earth and air.

If humanity interests him as strongly as a half-gnawed old bone, it does not attract him more. If he has signed portraits all-powerful in their hard and close modeling; if he has seen passing near him muscular men of irregular, ugly features, but of a severe elegance, and women with fat necks, round and full of face, whose heavy hair falls in curls, one finds in the bark of a tree, the stem of a grape vine, or in a rock that sticks out of a clump of grasses, the same knotty vigor, the same care in retaining the totality and the density of life, the same meticulous spirit. There are none of those audacious curves by which the Italians connect one form with another, not a hint of those subtle passages by which the Venetians or the Flemings make clear the incessant penetration of all the elements of the world. Everything is of equal importance and is separated fundamentally, without reciprocal echoes. . . . But everything is so searched out as to its form, so completely grasped in its intimate life, each detail is so deeply felt in its personal vibration, its imperceptible and mysterious characteristics, that the whole trembles and

murmurs, and an animation, general and vague, brings movement into this precise world. One might say that nature is recreated haphazardly, in the order, or rather in the absence of order, in which she presents herself



ALBRECHT DÜRER. Portrait of a Man.
(*Alte Pinakothek, Munich.*)

to us; that man has not intervened to bring Nature to the human plane and through her to express the ideas which she had just revealed to him, but that he demands that nature sing unaided—with all her innumerable voices, among which the voice of man counts neither more nor less than the others—the confused poem that

she never interrupts. Already we have reached German pantheism. Seemingly it is not the result of an absorption of the body of the universe into the substance of man then springing forth therefrom with the powerful and rhythmic intoxication which makes a living poem of the Hindu temples or the French cathedrals. It seems to express the impotence of a being who cannot separate that part of the world which he should accept from that part which he should reject, because he is too heavily armed for analysis, to study, without preconceptions, in all their aspects, and without order, the objects which present themselves to his view. Instead of absorbing nature, the man is wholly absorbed in nature.

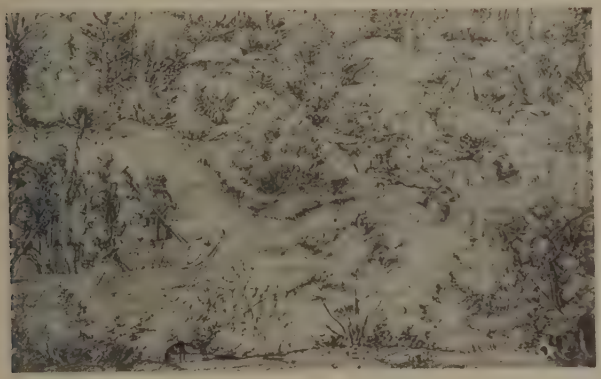
T. Riemenschneider. Saint Barbara, wood. (*Nuremberg Museum.*)

This impossibility of choosing in the objective world those elements which could yield a logically and plastically harmonious construction forms the stumbling-block of German art, if we consider it as the general realization of a collective ideal expressing the race and hurrying it toward a clearly defined goal. With the German artist, everything in Nature is on the same plane. He will be capable of studying each one of the elements which make us love her with a patience, a science, and a conscientiousness superior to those displayed by the Italian, the Frenchman, the Dutchman, and the Fleming, if not the Japanese and the Chinese, and with a sensibility equal to theirs. He will not

MATTHIAS GRÜNEWALD. Christ on the Cross.
(*Cassel Museum.*)

know, as they do, how to give to each thing in nature the importance that it has in our meditations; he will not know how to express in plastic generalizations the sensual, intellectual, or moral emotions which nature will yield him. Among two or three of the German artists we shall feel a great soul; it will not be able to define itself and never, as in other countries, will it leap into the torrent of powerfully organized life to join other strong or gracious souls so that together they may constitute a vast ensemble expression, forming a mass against the horizon of the past and sharply defining for the men of the future that which was thought and felt by a people of that moment. It is their whole history. Their power of analysis has blocked up for them, with a formidable heap of objects accumulated indiscriminately, the paths of the great syntheses. Their mathematicians did not find the law of gravitation. After their philosophers, with incomparable profundity, had verified one by one all the intuitions of the French and the Scotch—Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, and Hume—it was not the Germans who discovered transformism which Lamarck formulated at about the moment when Hegel was showing himself powerless to decide for himself. Not one of the great hypotheses, that for a hundred years have been directing the researches of biologists, came out of their laboratories which, in experiments and in observations, are the most prolific in the world; and their ingenious mechanicians did not discover a single one of the great implements of exchange and of transportation which have made the modern world. They never go by the straightest road to the one that alone is essential and most logical. Detail always masks the ensemble; their universe is not continuous, but made up of juxtaposed fragments. One sees

them, in their pictures, giving the same importance to a halberd as to a human face; a motionless stone is made to hold our attention as much as a body in movement; one sees them drawing a landscape like a map in a geography, and, in the decoration of a building, giving as much care to a clock with marionettes as to the statue



LUCAS CRANACH. The Stag Hunt, drawing. (*Louvre.*)

of Hope or of Faith, treating that statue with the same processes as that clock; and, when by dint of conscientiousness and labor they have given monumental proportions to a market or a nave, they suspend inappropriate objects there, immediately ruining the effect of it.

Hence, as we have seen, their negative pantheism which Dürer, first of all, expresses with so much confused strength. Hence, their pessimism, which, three hundred years before Schopenhauer, envelops the work of the engraver of Nuremberg as with an invisible atmosphere. This art, patient, exact, and complicated, although poetic and sincere to the point of self-immolation, with its tormented fantasy, with its symbolism

profound, but at times so obscure that it seems not to understand itself—this art, despite the concentrated splendor of its vital power and its vast sensuality, exhales the definitive sadness of the man who cannot come to a decision. Everywhere the hour-glass measures the flight of time, while the idyll smiles or the drama calls forth its tears, and often death traverses a peaceful landscape made charming by a love story. In the "Melancholia," which seems to summarize his whole work, one sees the genius of humanity borne down by lassitude, with all its conquests about it, because, despite its great wings, it has learned nothing of the essentials. Like Faust, Albrecht Dürer has ranged through all the worlds, in pursuit of the illusion which he has never been able to seize.

IV

Without doubt, man suffers whatever he is and in whatever period he lives. But it is only the faculty or the need for analysis that leads him to look upon life from the angle of pessimism, no longer to see any other direction in it than death, to doubt that his painful effort can serve the men who are to come, or, at least, to give them his aid joylessly and contrary to his heart. This philosophic discouragement, the more surprising when we contrast it with the courage shown by the Germans in the working of the material and in the examination of the world, is common to almost all their thinkers and almost all their artists. The misfortunes of their century do not suffice to explain it. The countries of Germany, in the fifteenth century and at the beginning of the sixteenth, were as prosperous as Flanders or as Italy, and infinitely happier than France, which was torn to pieces, ruined, and bled white by a

LUCAS CRANACH. Venus. (*Frankfurt Museum.*)

hundred years of war. . . . And yet there is hardly a German engraving, almost no German picture or bas-relief, without the haunting presence of death. The hour-glass is almost always there, or some broken bones. And it is especially in Germany that the "Dance of Death" creaks and shivers among the leaves of the old books of images or on the painted beams of the wooden bridges which the torrents, passing through the old cities, shake upon their piles. Death takes part in all the events of life. A smiling skeleton assists at an accouchement, he joins in the games of the little ones, he chants the nuptial march as he walks before the couple, he helps the miser to count his gold, he urges on the horses of the plowman, he cuts the string by which the blind man holds the dog that leads him, he grasps the bow of the musician, at the anointing of the Emperors he carries the crown or the miter, he stares at his image in the mirror of the coquette, and to the woman in love he plays the final serenade. . . . Everywhere he bears witness to the worst of the disasters that can strike a race; he bears witness to intellectual despair.

And how, indeed, should the German find encouragement in the outer world, how should he manage to inscribe in harmonious form the meeting of a universe and a mind harmonious in their organizations? The appearances of the air and of the earth leave floating images in the memory. Now we see mountains unexpectedly jagged, romantic depths with verdure and rocks, now pine woods toward which sloping meadows ascend, following each other and repeating each other with discouraging monotony. Always ill-defined profiles of landscape, a green and red countryside, of a somber green and a somber red—dead colors without

transparence, to which the mist with its excessive dullness lends no splendor. Nature is robust, but mournful; varied, but lacking in those masses which unite without effort; it has none of that luminous atmosphere which transforms everything which it envelops. The very

LUCAS CRANACH. Johann-Friedrich der Grossmüthige and Sybil of Cleves. (*Weimar Museum.*)

flowers that garnish from top to bottom the windows of the poorest homes seem dulled and without perfume.

When the sky is cloudless, nothing attracts or holds one in this picturesque uniformity and nothing leads the eye from one place to another place. When the tattered mists drag along, now masking a forest of which only the phantom of a tree remains visible, now covering the whole river in which one gets glimpses of a fleeting light on the crest of a wave, or again conceal-

ing an enormous layer of granite so that a castle seems hung in space, now disarranging the planes, now drowning and dislocating the lines—the eye perceives only what is fragmentary and diffused in the life of nature. If one examines one of those foggy landscapes, whose forms become only too precise when one looks at them from too near by, it takes possession of one's being like

Lucas Cranach. Paradise. (*Imperial Gallery, Vienna.*)

an ensemble of sounds rather than an ensemble of objects: a murmur breaks forth, fades away, and is reborn only to die; it is the torrents or the fountains in their vibrant motion, it is the ducks and the geese snuffling about, it is the lowing of beasts, the crack of a whip, the cock crowing with a voice of iron, the hour falling from a bell, dead leaves swept along, the creak of a wheel, the beating of a wing. . . . These are no longer images which have been determined, but the

indistinct outlines of dreams, obscure enigmas which rise in the brain. When it is no longer possible for the soul to choose the visible elements of a harmony of form, its need for consolation and for a refuge causes it to turn back upon itself and in itself to seek the scattered elements of a harmony of sentiment. And thenceforward, without taking the precaution to subject the sentiment, which carries them away, to the control of the outer world, too ill-defined for them to seize, it is within themselves that men make their choice, and they turn to singing. I have seen young Germans singing as they landed at Venice. They were singing Schumann, turning their backs on the palaces which they had not yet looked at. Going down the Rhine, I have seen German girls singing. They sang the song of Heine at the moment when they were passing the Lorelei, to which they did not give a glance.

The primitive art of the Germanic peoples and of the Scandinavians, descending from the fjords and the forests of the North, was to remain and must remain the form of their moral activity. Music alone escapes the dangers of analysis and gives the illusion of the absolute in its expression of the vaguest ideas in mathematical form. The workmanlike and dreamy nature of the Germans is at ease in it, because it offers them at once the most precise of means and the most unprecise of ends. Exclusively symbolic, it expresses, through a great soul, the aspiration in which a whole people mingles, and it does so with added power because it has nothing to define and because it makes use of an immense treasury of floating forms, of merging colors, and of the diffused sensations accumulated during centuries in the poetic instinct of this people, throughout the course of its unconscious and repeated contacts with

ALTDORFER. Saint George. (*Alte Pinakothek, Munich.*)

the world. From the Nibelungen to Goethe, a dull torrent of intricate images runs through the German mind, from century to century. It was in this torrent that Dürer bathed. He is a musician, though unaware of it. Despite the finish of his pictures and of his engravings, despite his insistence on making each detail stand out, and despite his prodigious technique, the ensemble does not appear as a distinct form, but as an evocation, as a suggestion of the atmosphere of sentiment. It is a moral sentiment that dominates; everything contributes a little toward imposing it. It is impossible for the German artist-workman to extract a visible general idea from the object which he studies, and the more precise he is the less he succeeds. The general idea exists before the work and wanders confusedly.

When Martin Luther decided upon music as a means of influence at the hour when Dürer was attaining the highest summit of his nature, he was therefore seizing upon the language best fitted to reveal the unknown powers which the German people had been accumulating in itself, without thought of their existence, ever since its industrious cities, from the Rhine to Saxony and from Franconia to the Baltic, had revealed their power. The dissolution, which was taking place in Rome, horrified the conscience of the Germans, incapable as they were of perceiving that in the heart of Italy itself, from Giotto to Angelico and from Masaccio to Michael Angelo, the artists were voicing the protest of the spirit against the abjectness common to all the powers of society which no longer considered themselves in danger. The sensuous beauty of that protest, which the Germans' lack of the plastic sense prevented them from understanding, concealed its

moral beauty from them. And in Germany the Reformation took on a character of radical antagonism toward the Renaissance.

Besides, it had good reason. A people can make use only of the weapons offered it by its soil and by its blood. In Italy the movement toward hope had interpreted itself through form and color. Here it was to express itself through sounds and words. The Reformation, from John Huss to Luther, strives for the expansion of man, in another language and under another pretext, but with the same lyricism and the same faith as that of the great Italians. Luther had in him the seething life of the century. He was one of those tumultuous beings in whom, as in a soil vibrant with subterranean forces, the burning lava of the blood sweeps everything along with it in a wave of joy, of enthusiasm, and of pride, with beer and the juice of meats, and possessing an irresistible need to make the flame of the spirit burst from its prison. The violent mind of the Renaissance was in him. And it was predestined that the Renaissance, the great research carried on with uncompromising passion by all the peoples of western Europe together, should take on, in the North, the form that he gave it.

But let us be on our guard. If the crowds, swept along by his words, sang while they followed him, it was because a deep instinct spoke in them; it was that they entered, in spirit, into a vaulted church which their antiplastic genius had been unable to give them for three centuries and which their musical genius erected spontaneously. They were obeying that vague and powerful hope which takes possession of the multitudes when a strong man addresses himself to them to lead them forth to battle. Whereas the theologians

believed that they were lifting up the conscience, they were lifting up needs—legitimate and sacred—for liberation and for happiness. The drama, and consequently the revelation of conscience, has for its theater the heart of the hero alone. The heroism of the crowds, if aroused by the words fallen from the lips of the heroes, recog-

BARTOLOMÄUS BRUYN. Pieta. (*Berlin Museum.*)

nizes less abstract motives, to which the heroes must give the highest expression. In the mass of the German people, there was no question of returning to the teachings of the apostles, but of freeing themselves from the powers in society which were threatening to crush its spirit.

If, in appearance, Germany was prosperous, if the lower middle class of its artisans was slowly heaping up the uncouth but innumerable products of its workmanlike industry, the country people were suffering. The

clergy held a third of the soil. Economically, Germany was under the domination of Rome. And Luther perceived that he had been mistaken as to the meaning which the crowd attached to his activity, on the day when, having consented to recognize the authority of the military lords of feudalism because he needed their aid in his struggle against the ecclesiastical lords of feudalism, he had been obliged to aid the Protestant nobility in crushing the miserable people who had been rendered fanatical by his words. The frightful war of the peasants gave to the Reformation its real significance. One class was replacing another in the possession of the soil; it was to stifle the moral life of Germany which for two centuries had been able to manifest itself with almost complete freedom, thanks to the antagonism of interests which set the two classes one against the other. The triumph of Protestantism coincided, through all Germany, with the abdication of its original thought. Nuremberg was extinguished.

V

Leaving Holbein aside, Holbein, who was touched also by the ruin of the German cities, since it was because of his misery that he was forced to leave Basel at the age of forty years and repair to the court of Henry VIII; the great German painters, Cranach among others, are of the same time as Dürer. His two pupils, even, are scarcely younger than he; Hans von Kulmbach who, with dry application, continues his work as best he can, and Altdorfer who forgets the sorrows of the century in the self-conscious and glittering landscapes in which his somewhat weak dilettantism seeks in the German forest the shelter of its foliage and warms himself at the fire of the romantic twilights.

Bartolomäus Bruyn. Portrait. (*Cologne Museum.*)

The bricks of the German roofs, the opaque woodlands send forth for the last time a dull reflection of somber red and of green almost black, in the canvases of Burgkmair, wherein is dying the school of Augsburg, which, with Christoph Amberger, will hear no more than an echo, almost inaudible but pure, of the great voice of Holbein. Mathias Grünewald, the master of Alsace, hangs the horrible body of the Christ upon the cross by the two arms which are almost torn from their sockets, breaks the two feet with a nail, bruises the body, flays it, and soils it; Mathias Grünewald is, however, a painter, and far superior as a painter to Dürer, to Holbein, and even to Cranach. He knows how to give to his color the accent of the drama, how to agitate, harrow, and terrify one. He is as tragic as he is trivial; he is cruel, sinister, and drunk with strength and horror. Colins, a mysterious sculptor of the end of the century, seems to have spent almost all his life upon carving, in the marble of the tomb of Maximilian, a kind of epic, romantic and warlike; it is overloaded and exaggerated in its movement, but a powerful rhythm preserves it from confusion; it is a rhythm, we may note in passing, that comes from the Flemish country. With Colins, Grünewald is the great dramatist of this anarchical and meticulous school, one in its spirit and yet made up of pieces and of fragments. Only, he does not transmit to his pupil, Baldung Grien, whose nudes are elongated, rounded, and idealized in accordance with the counsel of the Italian painters destined to become tyrannical—he does not transmit the secret of his painting, thick, vulgar, but penetrating wholly into matter and space in a manner which nothing in Germany had given any premonition of, and which is to disappear completely with him. After Holbein, Germany will close her eyes

HANS HOLBEIN. The merchant Gisze. (*Berlin Museum.*)

in order to listen more attentively to the rise within her of the murmur of revolt which will burst forth over the earth like an unending call to love, forever renewing itself in sobs and rolling with them toward calm and triumph, on the day when Beethoven will tear the symphonies from his heart.

Now, is it the struggle of the emperors and the popes that killed German art, or is it the decrease of energy, of which German art had been the supreme manifestation, that permitted the struggle of the emperors and popes? Was not creative genius exhausted for the moment? Doubtless, fifty years earlier the German princes could not have laid their hands upon the movement of the Reformation. It is when the inner force is exhausting itself that the external forces gain control once more, and the political victory of a religion always marks the subsiding of the disinterested faith which formulated it little by little. All the German artists of the beginning of the sixteenth century announce Luther, and consequently the apogee and, at the same time, the beginning of the decline of the affirmations which he brings. Since the time of the cathedrals, moral ideas dominated German plastics, which, because of its impotence to choose in external nature, had never attained the balance of masses and of the arabesques of line which resolve the moral problem, with all the others, by establishing in the mind that feeling for plenitude and for continuity which we call harmony. One can imagine Masaccio or Michael Angelo struggling unceasingly against the excesses of his passionate nature in order to raise his character to the level of his philosophic spirit; one cannot imagine Dürer as living any other than a healthy life, without impossible desires, and remaining always a good workman, a good son, brother,

husband, father, and citizen. His four Evangelists illustrate the apostleship of Luther; and it is not the first time that they present themselves in Germany with so simple a firmness. In 1519, when Luther had scarcely begun his struggle, Peter Vischer, the coppersmith, with

HANS HOLBEIN. Fragment of a fresco. (*Basel Museum.*)

his leather apron about his waist, had come forth from his forge to listen to the tumult of the century. Round about him second-rate sculptors were exhausting the formula for sentimental mysticism of the Rhenish School (of which the questionable "Virgin of Nuremberg" is the fashionable climax); Tillmann Riemenschneider, the nervous master of Würzburg, restive in

his shadow of asceticism, was seeking to carry over the lean elegance of Florence into his images of women with delicate hands, with heavy tresses, with astonished and candid faces, and pure bodies under their too complicated robes. And at this moment, Peter Vischer was demanding of his inflexible morality the secret of clear planes and well-defined volumes. Whether he cast armor in metal and made his figures live within it—those warriors as straight and sure as conscience, or whether he set up, round a tomb, his uncompromising apostles, one would say that in returning with the theorists of the Reformation to primitive Christianity, the very system that condemned the Renaissance, he was unconsciously bringing himself into agreement with the Renaissance in its summons to men to hope, even if Donatello gave a different name to that hope than he did.

With Dürer, perhaps even before Dürer, he is the spirit most clearly conscious of the forces which were urging the Reformer to action. The majority of the other artists went to him instinctively because they always incline to the thing that brilliantly sets the powers of life above the powers of death. In his violence and his joy were focused all the dispersed efforts in the direction of the light which each one of the workers of Germany was making in his obscure sphere. When Lucas Cranach traced the portrait of Melanchthon or that of Luther, with the respect and the emotion inspired by a thing that one understands but little and that one yet feels profoundly—when, at seventy-five years of age, he became the prisoner of the Empire at Mühlberg, he was certainly not expressing the desire to see the triumph of those principles in the name of which organized Protestantism was later to

drive the images from the temples, destroy the poem of the senses, condemn the affirmation of life, substitute the holiness of a single book for the holiness of all books affirmed by the Renaissance, and to complete, everywhere in Germany, the quenching of the fires of insurrection of which Dürer and Luther had been the greatest lights. It was with the joy of a child that he had loved the fighting and sensuous monk whose racy words, resounding lyricism and laughter, enchanted him. His confused wood-engravings, blond, shining, and of a charming warmth, were a means of propaganda among the people. In them one sees the Passion bleeding amid a strange procession of men in slashed cassocks, in shoes with turned-up points, amid rich trappings, horses with braided manes and with enormous tufts of plumes—the whole unrolling itself in unforeseen fashion. He translated into good German images the old poem of humanity which his friend translated into good German prose. He could have consented, less than anyone else, in order to assure the domination of a class, under pretext of religion or of morality, to set down the simple idylls revealed to him by the landscape of springtime, delicate and flowery, which he saw in his Saxon countryside. And less than anyone else because he had retained and was to retain until his death that freshness of sentiment in the German soul which Dürer scarcely knew. German pessimism never gained any hold on his heart because, in contrast with all the other masters of his race, he knew how to choose, and to choose spontaneously, far less like a scientist than like an artist. That is not to say that he was capable of rising to those powerful generalizations which are expressed by bare and rhythmical compositions, through which the heroes of art inclose within the architecture

and the movement of the form the scattered sensations which teach them, little by little, that the world is continuous. In the full tide of the sixteenth century, he is

HANS HOLBEIN. Luther's Wife. (*Galleria Corsini, Rome.*)

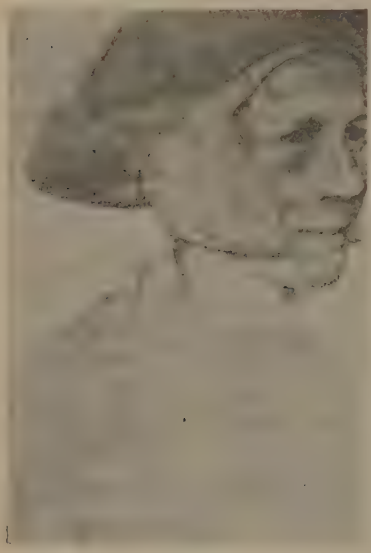
still a primitive; but this primitive, in his ingenuousness, is the first colorist after Grünewald and the most sensitive of all the German painters to the beauty of form.

He has not, certainly, the sense of the ridiculous. It is often the best means of confessing one's true nature. He paints nude women who have kept on their hats, very awkward women with thin legs, big flat feet, and big knees. But their faces are of an extreme charm, quite round, smiling, and a bit mischievous with their lovely blond tresses. Almost always he surprises them in the first hour of their womanhood; they have a firm, little belly, a pure undulation of the bust and the hip, budding breasts, and altogether the appearance of a flower hesitating to open. His candid sensuality directs his imagination into gardens all trembling with the flowers scattered about where mythological nudities, imperfect and delightful in form, assure us that the Reformer and his friends must not be made responsible for the unhealthy preoccupations which characterize the activity of the Protestant sects deriving from Calvin and the English Puritans. Despite the fact that heavy Teutonic knights are found in his pictures, the freshness of the female figures is triumphant, and as everything is enveloped in blond space into which the ashen reds bring a transparent vapor, one has not the courage to reproach him with unskillfulness. This rustic reveals to us an exquisite soul which, in eighty years of active life, could not exhaust its innocence.

VI

At first sight, there is no relationship between this awkward sensibility and the ever-increasing will which permitted the last of the German painters, dead at the age of forty-six, to inclose, within the sustained undulation of a line as sober as Latin intelligence, the complexity of the German soul. Upon closer study, however, the race is the same. Hans Holbein scrutinized

the drawings of Michael Angelo, of da Vinci, and of Raphael; he studied the frescoes of Venice, of Mantua, of Padua, and of Florence, perhaps, where he was to go after leaving Basel, in search of education from the Italian masters to assist him in extracting from the complex work of Cranach, of Dürer, of Grünewald, and of Martin Schoengauer the elements of a clearer and more plastic definition of the effort of Germany. A line impossible to break connects the clear, gentle, and wild portraits of Cranach, the linear and compact portraits of Dürer, all the portraits of all the Germans, from Aldegrever to Baldung Grien, and from Bartolomäus Bruyn to Christoph Amberger, with the matchless images of the master of Basel —a line, as evanescent as the light that plays over the surface of flesh and as decisive as a bony projection, giving the sensation of the mass of a living face, of the mind, and the muscles, of the bone, and the blood, and of the soul that hovers concentrated over all.



HANS HOLBEIN. Portrait, red chalk. (*Windsor Castle.*)

He has already inherited from his father, the old mas-

HANS HOLBEIN. The Wife of Burgomaster Meyer, drawing. (*Basel Museum.*)

ter of Augsburg, that line, awkward in appearance, which so faithfully follows the contour of the face, neglecting none of the accidents—that line which, with a terrible conscientiousness, restores in the face the irregular hollows and projections, giving it its special accent, through the manner in which the eye is set in the socket, the chin and cheekbone are outlined, the nose is flattened or protruded, the forehead or temples bend or broaden. The Italians had counseled him to insist a little more here, a little less there, in order to keep the face wholly at the height of its expression. They had shown him the way to fill a frame, how to stop at the proper moment, how to establish a defined volume in space. They certainly did no more for him than that. If he chooses, as they do, it is not to generalize: it is to individualize. Instead of attempting to arrive through synthesis at a universal truth, he attains through analysis a particular truth. The instrument which he receives from the Italians is employed the more to search within him and around him for the Germany which he is to define more accurately. When he leaves Basel for London, it is still as a German that he speaks of the English. It is as a German that, in the great severe portraits—less finished, perhaps, despite their grandiose minuteness than his sketches in pencil—he accumulates on the walls, the tables, and the shelves of the furniture, a hundred objects as precise as the face, inkstands, terrestrial globes, manuscripts, squares, compasses, magnifying glasses, and parchments which, with their steel points, their copper edges, their lenses, and their legible characters, one after another convince us of the certitude as to the place where we are and the identity of the being before whom we find ourselves.

This great artist appears at first as a great scientist.

HANS HOLBEIN. His wife and children. (*Basel Museum.*)

One would say that as a good German he had made it his mission to test, one after another, the truths which the Italians or the Flemings had intuitively conquered. By dint of will power, by dint of study, he came to understand why two or three associated colors, arousing in us the sense of the original unity of things, sweeping through us with an irresistible sentiment of fullness and purifying happiness, teach us more about the things and about ourselves than a century of researches accumulated incoherently. Like the German thinkers of the eighteenth century and the German scientists of the nineteenth, it was through the patient decomposition and the methodical reconstruction of all elements that he found the harmonics which other races seize upon in a single stroke.

But how his science elevates him, as soon as he grasps it! Those harmonies, juxtaposed and no longer penetrated by that visible atmosphere which reveals to the Venetians and to the painters of the Low Countries the universal movement of life, are like a pure mass of intangible reality sustained by everything within our remembrance. His reds, his oranges, and his blacks do not seem to be rubbed upon his somber greens, but to be woven into the material itself, yielding a rich substance as if ground in a mortar—and everything contributes to it: the clothing, the metal and the glass of the implements and the jewels, the wood of the furniture, the skin of the hands and the faces, and the opaque whites of the eyes. A dull splendor, which does not radiate, but which seems, on the contrary, to sink into the center of the work, gives to all these things a cold profundity, a depth under which other depths are divined, like a pure water to the bottom of which we cannot see. In this sense, his canvases surpass those

of the primitives of Bruges, whose red and black are like blood and ink changed into translucent stones. . . . The soul, space, and the living or the dead matter are concentrated together until they attain, at the extreme point of molecular condensation, the density of the diamond.

One understands how this man, so resolute in penetrating to the central core of things, should have been, among all the men of his time who made the attempt, the one who succeeded best in giving, through his images, an eternal life to the most impartial spirit of his century; the man of almost complete wisdom, who, amid the furious tumult of appetites and consciences into which men were hurled by the struggle between the reformers and the Church, retained entire freedom of judgment. As well as Erasmus, he had certainly seen the fire lighted about the stake, the pincers opening in the depth of dungeons, the torch in the hands of the people, and the steel in the hands of the soldiers. But his impassive eye sought, in the brutal torrent of the passions let loose, the forms and movements capable of expressing the passion which led him to search for higher realities. Through his art we have seen the spears pass by, the pikes flying, and the horsemen, the executioners, and the *landsknechts* putting forth their strength; but the violence is studied without hatred or sympathy—as a human phenomenon suited to enlighten him about men. The nervous elegance of the forms in action and the roll of the muscles under the leather garb appear in sober tumult. It is as if the steel of the sword were flowing in the arteries and were vibrating in the tendons, so as to compel life, even in its bloodiest quarrels, to follow the imperious mind of an artist who, when he seeks in wine the forgetfulness of his personal

cares, seems trying to cut off from himself everything that is not the image which his eye imprints upon his mind. The curves and volutes of the German masters, who, before him, twisted even the limbs of human beings like vine branches, are concentrated and stylized in the vigorous frame of fruits, leaves, and naked children with which his engravings and his drawings are surrounded. Through the force of his will, he compelled order to continue in the German soul during his lifetime. He imposed impartiality upon his creative power. The faces which he has left—those great Teutonic faces, at once bony and soft, under the shadow of the hats—are, in the realm of painting, certainly those which have transmitted to us most scrupulously—and at the same time the most soberly—the whole truths about the beings who passed before him. Never eye more pitiless—and consequently more enamored of that which survives the illusion of sight brought about in us by our indulgence toward ourselves and toward others—never eye more pitiless than

CHRISTOPH AMBERGER. Charles V.
(*Lille Museum.*)

the one he fixed upon us. Never the mind, rising up in the open eyes, the closed lips, the silent brows, and the jaws—never has the mind been more closely incorporated with the compact bones which it sculptures, and which sculpture it in a continual interchange. Now

COLINS. Capture of La Gueldu, bas-relief. (*Tomb of Maximilian, Innsbruck.*)

this mass of life thinks, now it does not think; nothing of it hovers outside itself, nothing of it escapes within. Holbein never employs his artist's piety to tell anything about nature and about its highest expression—the head of a man or of a woman—save that which they dictate to the voluntary indifference of his clear sight. Beautiful or ugly, all of these faces radiate a singular purity, which is the indescribable mark of his own dignity. He expends his whole tenderness on a feminine brow under a transparent veil, on the features, sad and grave and

heavy with humanity, of a woman who holds two children between her knees.

Although German sentimentalism is invisible in him, and doubtless because of that, Holbein represents the highest effort of German plastics. Very German in his scrupulous precision, his power of analysis and reconstruction, he is the only one of the Germans who knew how to choose, the only one who almost never confused what is beautiful with what is strange, what is essential with what is exact, what is profound with what is complicated; the only one who sought to disengage from detail and from accident, in a reality concrete in itself and outside of all realization, the secret logic of that reality. He is the only one who does not impose sentiment upon form, but seeks through form an understanding of sentiment. An incredible power of will made him slowly catch up with, and, at certain points surpass, those who have only to open their hearts to find the secret of the great plastic truths. It is natural that he should represent at once the end of German painting and the exception which proves its habitual impotence to give to the visible world its architectural meaning. In spite of him and apart from him, German painting remains a great confused murmur, quivering with indistinct life. It is the German musicians, with cries of exaltation and with the deep rapture of a universe on the point of self-discovery, who will one day seize upon the splendid weapon the painters of their country had let fall.

CRANACH. Luther's Wife. (*Berlin Museum.*)

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SYNOPTIC TABLES

SIGNS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Employed in the Synoptic Tables

M. Mohammedan Art
P. Persian Art
T. Turkish Art
A. Arabic Art
R. Russian Art
B. Byzantine Art
S. Sienese Art
U. Umbrian Art
L. Lombard Art
F. Ferrarese Art
Bo. Bolognese Art
G. Ghent
Br. Bruges
Pl. Portugal
C. Cologne
N. Nuremberg
H. Holland

a. Architect
s. Sculptor
p. Painter
e. Engraver
d. Draftsman
m. Musician

Dates	India	China
		Bronzes (*cire perdue* process)
		The Porcelain Tower of Nankin
		Temple of Heaven, at Pekin (1421)
15th century, 1st half	M. Great Mosque of Ahmedabad (1424)	
	M. Mosque of Myrzapore	
	M. Mosque of Rani Sipri at Ahmedabad (1431)	
		Lu-Fu p.
	Tower of Victory at Chitta (1439)	
	Sculptured rocks of Gwalior	
	M. Mosque of Kontab S' ah at Ahmedabad (1446)	Tombs of the Mings

Dates	Japan	Byzantium and Islam
		P. Hazret mosque in Turkestan (14
		P. *Mohamed*, Persian a. of the Mau leum of Tamerlane at Samarka (1405)
	Palace of Kinkakuji	
	Josetsu, p. (emigrated from China)	T. Green mosque of Brousa (1414)
		A. El Mouaiyad mosque at Cairo (1-
15th century, 1st half		R. Byzantine architecture
		B. *Andronicus* of Byzantium, p.
	Musokokushi, gardener	
		P. Blue Mosque of Tauris (1437)
	Kane-aya, carver	
		R. Kremlin of Kasan

A

Dates	ITALY	
	Florence Tuscany—Lombardy	Rome Umbria—Naples—Genoa
	Lorenzo di Bicci (1350-1427), p. *Taddeo Bartoli* (1363-1422), p. S.	
	Nanni di Banco (1373-1420), s.	*Gentile da Fabriano* (1370-1428), p. U.
	Jacopo della Quercia (1378-1438), s. S.	*Ottaviano Nelli* (?-1444), p. U.
	Foundling Hospital, Florence (1419-'51) Congress of Architects, Florence (1420) **Filippo Brunelleschi** (1377-1446), a. of the Cathedral of Florence (1420-'31) Masolino da Panicale (1383-1440), p.	
	Masaccio (1401-'28), p.	
	Goldsmith's work—Tapestries	
15th century, 1st half	*Lorenzo Ghiberti* (1374-1455), s.	
	Riccardi Palace (1430)	
	Fra Angelico (1387-1455), p.	
	Andrea del Castagno (1390-1457), p.	
		Vitelleschi Palace at Corneto (1437)
	Donatello (1386-1466), s.	
	Pitti Palace (1440) *Domenico Veneziano* (1400-'61), p.	
	Filareta (?-1466), a.	
	Michelozzo Michelozzi (1396-1472), a.	*Bernardo Rossellino* (1409-'64), a.
	Filippo Lippi (1406-'69), p.	
	L. B. Alberti (1404-72), a. p. s.	

Dates	Venice Venetia—Emilia	France
		Jacquemart de Hesdin, illuminator
		Jean Malouel, p.
		Notre Dame de l'Epine (1420-'29)
	Giovanni Buon, a. of the Palace of the Doges (1424-'38) Ca d'Oro (1424-'30)	Enamellers of Limoges Tapestries
	Venetian Palaces	Church of Caudebec-en-Caux (1426)
		Henri Bellechose, p.
15th century, 1st half	*Pisanello* (1380-1456), p. d. e.	
		Château of Combourg (15th and 16th centuries)
		Château of Castelnau de Bretonaux
		Château of Dieppe (1435)
		Alex. de Berneval, a. of the Church of St. Maclou at Rouen (1437)
	Jacopo Bellini (1400-'64), p.	
	Giorgio di Matteo, a. of the Cathedral of Sebenico (1443)	Hospital of Beaune (1443) House of J. Cœur at Bourges(1443-145
	Malatesta Palace at Rimini (1446) Castle of Torrechiara (1448-'60)	*Simon Marmion*, p.
	Squarcione (1397-1474), p. of Padua	*Jean Michel, Georges de la Sonnette*, a. of Tonnerre

Dates	England	Flanders and the Netherlands
	England	*J. van Thienen*, a. of the City Hall of Brussels (1402-'54)
		Hubert van Eyck (1366-1426), p. Br.
		Painting in oil
		Engraving on wood
		The Brothers *de Limbourg*, p.p. Br.
		Jan van Eyck (1387-1440), p. Br.
15th century, 1st half		
	All Souls College, Oxford (1437)	
	Kings College, Cambridge (1440-'46-1515)	
		Roger van der Weyden (1400-'64), p.P *Albert van Outwater*, p. Br.
	Divinity School, Oxford (1445-'80)	
		Petrus Cristus (1395-1472), p. Br. *Mathieu de Layens*, a. of the City Hal of Louvain (1447-'63)
		Engraving on metal

Dates	Germany and Scandinavia	Spanish Lands
		Cathedral of Seville (1402-1506)
	City Hall of Bremen (1405-'10-1612) *Koenigshoefen*, a. of the Roemer at Frankfurt (1406)	The brothers *Diaz*, a. s.
		Luis Dalmau, p.
	Engraving on wood	Reconstruction of the Alcazar of Segovia (1410)
	Castle of Marksburg	
	Church of Esslingen	Cathedral of Palencia (14th-15th centuries)
	Meister Francke, p. of Hamburg	*Sagrera*, a. of the Lonja of Palma (1426-'48)
	Hans von Hültz ('-1449), a.	
15th century, 1st half		
	Stephan Lochner (?-1452), p. C.	Castle of Coca
	Lucas Moser, Suabian, p.	
		Lorenzo Suarez de Figueroa, a. of the Alcazar of Zafra (1437)
	Hans von Büren, a. of the Gursenich at Cologne (1441-'52)	*Jean de Cologne*, a. of the Cartuja of Miraflores (1441)
	Burgthor at Lübeck (1444)	*Pedro Lopez de Ayala*, a. of the Castle of Guada (1444-'64)
	Casper Isenmann (?-1466), p.	Pl. Portuguese tapestries
	Conrad Witz (1400-?), p. of Constance *Hans Multscher* (?-1467), p. The Meistersing of Augsburg	*Père Johan de Tarragona*, s. Palace of Zaraus

Dates	History
	The Imitation of Jesus Christ (?)
	Makrisi (1365-1442), Arab Historian
	The Arabian Nights
	War of the Hussites (1419-'36)
15th century, 1st half	*Joan of Arc* (1412-'31)
	Cosimo de Medici (1384-1464)
	Insurrection of Bruges (1436) *Guttenberg* discovers printing (1436)

Dates	India	China
		Lin Leang, p.
	M. Mosque of Mohafiz, Ahmedabad (1465)	
		Bell tower at Pekin
		Temple of Wou-t'a. Sseu (1473)
15th century, 2d half		*K'ieou Ying*, p.
		Chen-Tcheou (1427-1507), p.
	M. Mosque of Shah-Ahnn at Ahmedabad (1480)	
		Restoration of the Great Wall
	Palace of Gwalior (1486)	
	Temple of Gobindeo at Binderabund (1490)	*Lu-Ki*, p.
	Pagoda of Shiva at Bijanagar	
	Monuments of Chillambaram	

Dates	Japan	Byzantium and Islam
		T. *Christodoulos*, Byzantine a. of the Mohammedic Mosque at Constantinople (1465)
	Sesson (?-1495), p.	
15th century, 2d half		A. Mosque of Kait Bey at Cairo (1472) R. Kremlin of Moscow (1472-'91-1636, etc.) P. Ceramics—carpets
	Sesshiu (1428-1506), p.	
	Yoto-Yujo, carver	T. *Khair-ed-din*, a. of the Bayezidie Mosque at Constantinople (1484)
	Kano Masanobu (1453-'90), p., founds the School of Kano *Nagoshi Yoshichiro*, bronze-worker	
	Shiugetsu (?-1520), p.	
	Tosa Mitsonobu (?-1525), p.	
	Sankobo, s. of masks	

Dates	ITALY	
	Florence Tuscany—Lombardy	Rome Umbria—Naples—Genoa
	Paolo Uccello (1397-1475), p.	
	Luca della Robbia (1400-'81), s.	
	Sano di Pietro (1406-'81), p. S.	
	Great Hospital of Milan (1456) *Desiderio da Settignano* (1428-'64), s.	Palace of the Vatican (1455) Palazzo di Venezia at Rome (1455)
	Lorenzo di Pietro (1412-'80), p. S. *Finiguerra* (1426-'64), e.	
	Agostino di Duccio (1418-'81) s. *Antonio Rossellino* (1427-'78), s.	
	Mino da Fiesole (1431-'84), s.	
	Verrocchio (1435-'88), s. p.	**Piero della Francesca** (1416-'92), p.
	Piccolomini Palace at Siena (1469)	
	Spannocchi Palace at Siena (1470)	
	G.-A. Amadeo (1447-1522), s. of the Colleone Chapel at Bergamo (1470-'76)	
	Bartolo di Giovanni (?-1491), s.	S. Pietro in Montorio (1472)
	Benozzo Gozzoli (1420-'98), p.	
15th century, 2d half	*Balduccio* (1427-'99), s. of Pisa	*Melozzo da Forlì* (1438-'92), p.
	Goldsmith's work—Tapestries	
	Antonio Pollaiuolo (1431-'98), p. *Baldovinetti* (1427-'99), p. *Benedetto da Majano* (1442-'97), s.	*Meo del Caprina* (1430-1501), a. *Alunno* (1430-1502), p. U.
	Piero Pollaiuolo (1413-'96), p. *Matteo Civitali* (1435-1500), s. of Lucca *Sperandio* (of Mantua), e. of medals	
	Domenico Ghirlandajo (1449-'94), p.	
		Bonfigli (1454-'96), p. U.
	Cosimo Rosselli (1439-1507), p.	
	Andrea della Robbia (1437-1528), s. *Cronaca* (1454-1508), a. of the Strozzi Palace (1489-1533) *Filippino Lippi* (1457-1504), p. The Certosa of Pavia (1491)	Palazzo della Cancilleria (1486-'95)
	Sandro Botticelli (1447-1510), p.	**Bramante** (1444-1514), a. of St. Peter's Rome
	Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), p. s.	*Bernardino Pinturricchio* (1454-1513) p. U.
	Boltraffio (1467-1516), p. L.	*Pietro Perugino* (1446-1523), p. U.
	Albertinelli (1474-1515), p.	
	Cesare da Sesto (?-1520), p. L.	**Luca Signorelli** (1450-1523), p. U.

Dates	Venice Venetia—Emilia	France
	Cosimo Tura (1406-'69), p. F. Castle of Malatesta at Cesana (1452) *Francesco Cossa* (?-1474), p. F.	(School of Avignon) *Enguerrand Charonton*, p.
	Beroviero, glass-maker	*King René* (1409-'80), p. *Pierre Villate*, p. *Nicolas Fromment* (?-1482), p.
	Ducal Palace of Urbino (1460)	**Johan Foucquet** (1411-'80), p.
		Château of Langeais (1460) Cloister of Tréguier (1461-'68)
	A. and *B. Vivarini*, p. p.	Cathedral of Alençon Château of Saumur Château of Vitré
	Ercole Roberti (?-1496), p. F.	Château of Plessis-Bourré (1467) Château of Jonzac
		"Pieta" of Villeneuve-les-Avignon
		Château of Tarascon
	S. Andrea at Mantua (1472-'96)	*A. Le Moiturier* (1425-'97), s.
15th century, 2d half	*Antonio Rizzo* (1430-'98), s. s.	Tapestries Enamelers of Limoges
		Ducal Palace of Nevers (1475-16t century)
	Loggia of Verona (1476) *Crivelli* (1440?-'94?), p.	*Mathieu Ragueneau*, s. of the Cathed rals of Lectoure (1475), and Auc (1489)
	Antonello da Messina (1444-'93) Oil-painting in Italy	Château of Usé *Jean Bourdichon*, p.
		Michel Colombe (1430-1512), s.
	Gentile Bellini (1426-1507), p.	Hotel de Cluny (1485) Hotel de Bourgtheroulde at Roue (1485)
	Mantegna (1431-1506), p. of Padua	Church of Abbeville (1488-1539)
	Giovanni Bellini (1428-1507), p.	Château of Josselin
	Fra Giocondo (1435-1515), s. *Lazzaro Sebastiani* (1449-1512), p.	*Martin Chambiges*, s.
	Liberale da Verona (1451-1515), p.	
	Francia (1450-1517), p. Bo.	
	Cima da Conegliano (1459-1517), p.	*Robert Ango*, s. of the Palais de Justi of Rouen (1499)

Dates	England	Flanders and the Netherlands
		Jacques Daret (the *Maître de Flemalle*), p. Br.
		Dirk Bouts (1410-'75), p. Br.
		Hugo van der Goes (1420-'82), p. G.
		Memling (1430-'94), p. Br.
15th century, 2d half	S. Mary Magdalen College of Oxford (1474-'81)	
		City Hall of Ghent (1482-1516-'38)
		Geertgen Sint-Jans, p. H.
		van der Meire (1450-1512), p. Br.
		Brussels tapestries
		Jerome Bosch (1450-1518), p. H.
		Gerard David (?-1524), p. Br.

Dates	Germany and Scandinavia	Spanish Lands
	Castle of Hohkoenigsburg	
	Castle of Hohenzollern (1454)	
	The *Master of Liesbom*, p.	Cathedral of Murcia
		Juan and *Enrique Guas*, a. a. of the Palace of Guadalajara (1460)
	Jorg Syrlin (?-1491), s. of Ulm *Nicolas von Leyen* (?-1493), s. of Strasburg	*Juan Beiscats*, p.
	Martin Schoengauer (1445-'91), p. e.	Paintings of the Alhambra (1470)
15th century, 2d half	*Michel Pacher* (1430-'98), s.	
	Hostenthor of Lübeck (1476) *Master of the Life of Mary*, p. C.	San Juan de los Reyes at Toledo (1476)
	Master of the Death of Mary, p. C.	*Pedro Berruguete* (?-1500), p. *Pedro Compte*, a. (?) of the Lonja of Valencia (1482)
	Meister Wilhelm, p. C	*Antonio del Bincón* (1446-1500), p.
	Michael Wohlgemuth (1434-1516), p. *Adam Krafft* (1456-1507), s.	*Pablo Ortiz*, s. Colegio de San Gregorio of Valladolid (1488-'96)
	Jacopo dei Barbari (?-1516), p., Italian at Nuremberg	Padre *García de Resende*, a. of the Tower of Belem
	Zeitblom of Ulm (1450-1517), p.	*Gil de Siloe*, s.
	The *Master of St. Severin*, p. C.	
		Juan Sanches de Castro (1454-1516), p.
	Hans Jost (1460-1519), s.	

Dates	History
	Insurrection of Ghent (1451)
	The Turks capture Constantinople (1453) The English driven from France (1453)
15th century, 2d half	*François Villon* (1431-?)
	The Arabian Nights
	Marsilio Ficino (1433-'99)
	Louis XI (1461-'83), Unity of France
	Lorenzo de' Medici (1488-'92)
	Capture of Granada (1492), Unity of Spain *Christopher Columbus* (1445-1506) discovers America (1492) *Aldus Manutius* (1449-1515)
	France invades Italy (1494)
	First watches at Nuremberg Execution of *Savonarola* (1498)
	Vasco da Gama goes to the Indies (1498)

C

Dates	India	China
	Gopuram of Conjeveram	
		Kong Teh'ouen founds the potteries of Yi-hing Yao
	Temple of Madan Mohan at Binderabund	*Theou Che-mien*, p.
	Jewels. Goldsmith's work. Industrial art	Painting of the *Mings*
16th century, 1st half	Tower of Vitoba at Bijanagar (1529)	*Ouen-tcheng-ming* (1480-1559), p.
	Indo-Thibetan temples of Patan (?)	
	M. Mausoleum of Golconda	
	Golden Temple of Anoristar	

Dates	Japan	Byzantium and Islam
		A. *Juhen del Rey*, armorer
	Honami-Koyetsu (1556-1637), p.	
	Soami, p.	
	Gorodayon-Shusui introduces porcelain into Japan	
		B. Paintings of Mount Athos
16th century, 1st half		P. Ceramics—Jewels—Carpets
		B. *Manuel Panselinos* (?), p.
	Kano Motonobu (1475-1559), p.	
	Tosa Mitsumoto (?-1569), p.	
		A. Ramparts of Jerusalem (1537) T. Sinan, a. of the Suleimanieh mosq at Constantinople (1540)
	Ramparts of Osaka	
		P. *Djahangir*, p.

Dates	ITALY	
	Florence Tuscany—Lombardy	Rome Umbria—Naples—Genoa
	Andrea Solario, p. L.	
	Piero di Cosimo (1462-1521), p.	*Caradosso* (1445-1527), goldsmith
	Borgognone (?-1523), p. L. *Cr. Solari* (?-1525). a. L.	*Fiorenzo di Lorenzo* (1472-1520), p. U. *Julius II* (1503-'13) calls the artists to Rome
	Fra Bartolommeo (1475-1517), p.	
	Torrigiani (1472-1528), s. *Sangallo* the Elder (1455-1534), a. *Giovanni della Robbia* (1469-1529), s. *Lorenzo di Credi* (1459-1537), p.	*G. de Marcillat* (1467-1529), glass-worker *Baldassare Peruzzi* (1481-1536), a. of the Farnesine (1509-'11)
	Bernardino Luini 1475-1533), p. L. *Marrina* (1476-1534), s. S.	**Raphael Sanzio** (1483-1520), p.
	Andrea del Sarto (1486-1531), p.	
	New Sacristy of Florence (1520-'24) *Gaudenzio Ferrari* (1471-1546), p. L. *Sangallo* the Younger (1483-1546), a.	*Correggio* (1494-1534), *Bagnacavallo* (1484-1522), p.
	Sodoma (1477-	1549), p. S.
16th century, 1st half	*Bambaja* (1480-1548), s. L.	*Sebastiano del Piombo* *Giulio Romano* (1492-
	Michael Angelo Buonar	**roti** (1475-1564), s. p. a.
	Apogee of the art of majolica	Palazzo Farnese (1530-'80) *Perino del Vaga* (1499-1547), p.
	Ridolpho Ghirlandajo (1483-1541), p. *Pontormo* (1494-1557), p.	
		Giovanni da Udine (1487-1564)
	Baccio Bandinelli (1488-1565), s. *Vasari* (1512-'74) publishes his "Lives" (1542)	Villa Medici (1540)
	Benvenuto Cellini (1500-'72), s. and goldsmith	*Daniele da Volterra* (1509-'66), p.
	Bronzino (1502-'72), p.	*Vignola* (1507-'73), a. of the Castle of Caprarola (1547-'59)
	Tribolo (1487-1550) designs the Boboli Gardens (1550)	*Pirro Ligorio* (?-1583), a. of the Villa d'Este (1549)

Dates	Venice Venetia—Emilia	France
	Leopardi (?-1522), a.	The *Master of Moulins* (*Jean Perréal*) (1455-1528), p.
	Carpaccio (1460-1522), p.	
	Giorgione (1477-1510), p. *Basaiti* (1480-1520), p.	*Guillaume Regnault* (1450-1533), a.
	Albrecht Dürer in Italy (1506)	
	Lorenzo Costa (1460-1535), p. F.	
	V. di Biagio (*Catena*) (14—?-1531), p. *Andrea Riccio* (1470-1532), s. of Padua *Buonconsiglio* (?-1537), p. of Vicenza *M. A. Raimondi* (1475-1530), e. Bo *Cavazzola* (1486-1522), p. The *Lombardis* (1435-1559), a. a.	The Tour St. Jacques (1508-'22) Church of Brou (1511-'36) Château of Chenonceaux (1512-'23'68 Aubusson tapestries
	Palma Vecchio (1435-1528), p. *Pordenone* (1483-1539), p. *Bonifazio* (?-1540), p.	*Jacques Caron*, a. of the City Hall o Arras *Leonardo da Vinci* in France (1516) *Pierre Bontems*, s.
	Fortresses of the Peloponesus	*Jacques Sourdeau*, *Pierre Nepveu*, a. a of the Château of Chambord (1519 '56)
	p. of Parma	*Jeannet Clouet* (1475-1541), p. and d.
	Lorenzo Lotto (1480-1544), p.	*Pierre Chambiges* (?-1544), a.
	Parmigianino (1504-'40), p. of Parma	
16th century, 1st half	(1485-1547), p. 1546), p. of Mantua	Hotel de Ville of Compiègne
	Calcar (1499-1546), p.	Château of La Rochefoucauld (1528-'3 Château of Fontainebleau (1528-1609
	Palazzo Pompei at Verona (1530)	*Rosso* (1494-1557), p. of Florence i France (1530) (**School of Fontaine-bleau**)
	Garofalo (1481-1559), p. F. *Michele Sammicheli* (1484-1559), a.	
	Dosso Dossi (1479-1562), p. F. *Moretto* (1498-1555), p. of Brescia	
	J. Sansovino (1486-1570), s. and a. of the Library of Venice (1536)	Château of Dampierre (1535) Château of Ecouen (1535) *Clément Jannequin* (?-1559), m.
	Titian (1477-1576), p.	*Jacques d'Etampes*, a. of the Château o Valençay (1540), Château of Mes nières (1540-'46) **Pierre Lescot** (1510-'71), a. of the Louvre (1541-'46-'56-'78-1624)
	Paris Bordone (1500-'70), p.	*Ligier Richier* (1500-'72), s. **Jean Goujon** (?-1568), s. *François Clouet* (1500-'72), p. *Primaticcio* (1504-'70) (School of Fontainebleau)
	Basilica of Vicenza (1549) Venetian palaces	*Corneille de Lyon* (1500-'75), p. Château of Blois Fort Carré of Antibes (1550-17th century)

Dates	England	Flanders and the Netherlands
		J. Patinir (?-1524), p. *Pierre van Allet*, tapestry maker
		Keldmans the Younger, a. of the City Hall of Middelburg (1507-'13)
		Palais de Justice of Liége (1508-'40)
	St. John's College, Cambridge (1511)	
	St. John's College, Oxford (1515)	Churchof St. Jacques of Liége (1513-'38) *Quentin Metsys* (1466-1538), p. *J. Cornelissen* (1480-1533), p. H.
		J. Gossaert (de Mabuse) (1470-1542), p.
	Hampton Court Palace	*Bernard van Orley* (1490-1542), p.
		van de Peede, a. of the City Hall of Oudenarde (1525-'29) Tapestries
16th century, 1st half		*Lucas van Leyden* (1494-1533), p. and e. H. *Jan Mostaert* (1474-1556), p. H.
	Holbein in England (1531)	
		Cornelis Tennissen (1500-'53), p. H.
	St. James' Palace, London	
		Lancelot Blondel (1495-1561), p.
		Jan Schoorel (1495-1562), p. H.
	Trinity College, Cambridge (1546)	City Hall of Kampen (1543) *van Hemessen* (1500-'68), p.

Dates	Germany and Scandinavia	Spanish Lands
	Holbein the Elder (1460-1524), p.	*Bartolomeo Ordoñez* (?-1520), Catalan s.
	Peter Vischer (1455-1529), s. N. *Riemenschneider* (1460-1531), s. *Hans Maler*, p. of Ulm *Baldung Grien* (1475-1522), p.	The brothers *Alemán*, s. and p. *Enrique de Egas* (?-1534), a. of the Hospital of Santa Cruz, Toledo (1504) *Damián Forment* (?-1533), s. of Aragon
	Burgkmair (1473-1531), p.	Pl. Church of Thomar
	Manuel Deutsch (1484-1530), Swiss p.	*J. de Borgoña* (?-1533), p. of Toledo
	Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), p. and e.N. **Mathias Grünewald** (?-1530), Alsatian, p. *Veit Stoss* (?-1533), s. *Hugo Altdorfer* (1480-1538), p.	*Diego de Riaño* (?-1533), s. *Diego de Siloe* (?-1533), s. *Diego Morlanes*, s. Casa de las Conchas at Salamanca (1512)
	Joos von Cleve (?-1540), p.	*Copin* (?-1542), s. of Holland
	Martin Schiffner (?-1541), p.	Pl. *Joao de Castilho* (1490-1581), a. of the Convent of Belem (1517)
	Hans Schoenffelein (1480-1540), e.	*Philippe Vigarni* (?-1543), s. *Gil de Ontañon*, a. of the Cathedral of Salamanca (1513) and of the Cathedral of Segovia (1525-'77)
	Peter Flettner (1485-1546), s.	
	Luther's Choral (1524) **Lucas Cranach** (1472-1553), p. and a. **Hans Holbein** (1497-1543), p. and e. House of the Butchers at Hildesheim (1529)	
16th century, 1st half	*Bartholomäus Bruyn* (1493-1544), p.	Palace of Monterrey at Salamanca (1530)
		Alonso Berruguete (1480-1561), s.
	Castle of Gripsholm, Sweden (1537)	
	Aldegrever (1502-'55), p. and e.	
	Christoph Amberger (1500-'61), p.	*Luis de Vargas* (1502-'68), p.

Dates	History
	Erasmus (1467-1528)
	Bayard (1476-1524)
	Voyages of *Albuquerque* (1510-'11) *Machiavelli* (1469-1531) *Ulrich von Hutten* (1488-1525)
	The Portuguese in China (1514) *Ariosto* (1474-1533)
	The Turks conquer Egypt (1517)
	Leo X (1513-'22) *Luther* (1483-1546) preaches the Reformation (1517-'23) *Magellan* sails around the world (1520-'21)
	Guiccardini (1482-1540)
	Copernicus (1473-1543)
16th century, 1st half	
	Paracelsus (1493-1541) The Indian Empire of the Great Mogul (1526) Sack of Rome (1527) *Henry VIII* (1509-'47) The Collège de France (1529)
	Taking of Florence by the Imperials (1530), p The Insurrection of the Peasants in Germany (1524-'35) *Pizarro* and *Cortés* conquer America (1519-'31) England separates from Rome (1533) *Ignatius Loyola* founds the Society of the Jesuits (1534) *Rabelais* (1483-1553) *Francis I* (1515-'47)
	Michael Servetus (1509-'53)
	The Portuguese in Japan (1542) *André Vésale* (1514-'64)
	Council of Trent (1545-'63) *Calvin* (1509-'63) *Charles V* (1519-'56) defeats the Protestants at Mühlberg (1547)

Dates	India
	M. Mausoleum of Humayun at Delhi (1556) M. Great mosque of Agra (1556) M. Great mosque of Bijapur (1557) M. Citadel of Bijapur
	M. Mosque of Futtipore (1565) M. Palace of Agra (1566)
	Tower of Sati Bauri at Multra (1570) M. Fortress of Agra (1571)
16th century 2d half	
	Artificial lake and palace of Odeypoure (1588)
	Pagoda of Kombakonum (1600)

Dates	China	Japan
		Tshiokonvan (?-1590), p.
16th century 2d half		
	Painting of the *Mings*	
		Kano Eitoku (1543-'90), p.
		Temple of Nishi Onguandji (1578)
		Ngeu, potter
		The Netsukes
		Prints

Dates	Byzantium and Islam	Florence Tuscany—Lombardy
	T. *Sarhoc Ibrahim*, glass-worker	
	P. **Behzade** (1515-?), p.	
	B. *Franco Castellano*, p.	
		Leone Leoni (1509-'92), s. and e.
	T. Suleimanie mosque at Andrinople (1571)	
16th century 2d half	P. *Bokhari*, p.	
	P. Ceramics—Carpets	
	P. *Djani*, p.	*Giovanni da Bologna* (1524-1608), Fr s. at Florence
	P. *Mani*, p.	*Aless. Allori* (1535-1607), p.
		Fontana (1543-1607), a. L.
	P. *Meidan I*, Shah of Ispahan	*Filippo Paladino* (?-1614), s.
	P. *Timur*, p.	

Dates	ITALY	
	Rome Umbria—Naples—Genoa	Venice Venetia—Emilia
	G. Alessi (1512-'72), a. of Genoa	
		Moroni (1520-'78), p. of Brescia
		Andrea Palladio (1518-'80), a.
		Schiavone (1522-'82), p.
		Bassano (1510-'92), p.
	Luca Cambiaso (1527-'85), p. of Genoa	
		Tintoretto (1512-'94), p.
	Palestrina (1524-'94), m.	*El Greco* in Venice
16th century 2d half		**Veronese** (1528-'98), p.
		Venetian palaces
	Academia di San Luca (1577)	
	Cavaliere (1550-1600), m.	
	Baroccio (1528-1612), p.	*Antonio da Ponte*, a. of the Bridge of the Rialto (1588-'91)
	Agostino Carracci (1558-1601), p. Bo. *Luigi Carracci* (1555-1609), p. Bo. *Annibale Carracci* (1560-1609), p. Bo.	
	M. A. Caravaggio (1569-1609), p. of Naples	*Scamozzi* (1552-1616), a.
		Palma Giovine (1544-1628), p.

Dates	France	England
	Philibert Delorme (1515-'70), a. of the Château of Anet (1552)	
	Goudimel (1510-'72), m. *Léonard Limousin* (1505-'77), enameler *Jean Bullant* (1515-'78), a.	
	Jean Cousin (1500-'89), s. and p.	
	Bernard Palissy (1510-'90), ceramist	
	Germain Pilon (1530-'90), s.	
16th century 2d half		
	Château of Maintenon	
	Château of Amboise (1590)	
	Hotel de Ville of La Rochelle (1595-1607)	
		Isaac Oliver (1556-1617), p.

Dates	Flanders and the Netherlands	Germany and Scandinavia
		Hofkirche of Innsbruck (1553-'63)
	Anton Mor (1512-'76), p. H. (lived in Spain)	Heidelberg Castle (1556-1601-'07)
	Pieter Breughel (1525-'69), p.	
	Pieter Pourbus (1510-'84), p. H.	
	City Hall of the Hague (1565)	
	Roland de Lassus (1520-'94), Walloon, m.	City Hall of Lübeck (1570-1614)
16th century 2d half	Tapestries	
		Castle of Kronberg in Denmark (1577-'85)
	Martin de Vos (1531-1603), p.	*Colins* (of Malines) (1526-1612), s.
	Coninzloo (1544-1607), p.	
	Francken (1542-1616), p.	
	City Hall of Leyden	

Dates	Spanish Lands	History
	Gaspar Becerra (1520-'70), s.	
	Pedro Campana (1503-'80), p.	Spain defeats France at St. Quentin (1558)
	Morales (1509-'86), p.	*St. Theresa* (1515-'82)
	Juan de Herrera (1509-'86), a. of the Escorial (1562)	*Carnoëns* (1525-'80)
	J. F. Navarrete (1526-'79), p.	First newspaper in Venice (1563)
	Sanchez Coello (?-1590), p.	*Les Estienne* (1504-'94)
		Wars of religion in France (1562-'72)
		Revolution of the Netherlands (1568)
	Pompeo Leoni (?-1610), Tuscan s. works at the Escorial	Battle of Læpanto (1571)
		Montaigne (1533-'92)
16th century 2d half		
	Palace and gardens of Aranjuez (1575)	
		Philip II (1555-'98)
		Tasso (1544-'95)
		Akbar, Grand Mogul (1556-1605)
		Tycho-Brahé (1546-1601)
	Pablo de Cespedes (1538-1608), p.	*Giordano Bruno* (1550-1600)
	Vittoria (1540-1608), m.	*Elizabeth* (1558-1603)
		The Armada (1588)
		Zacharie Jansen discovers the microscope (
	Pantoja de la Cruz (1551-1609), p.	*Cervantes* (1547-1606)
		Shakespeare (1564-1606)
	Theotocopuli el Greco (1548-1625), p.	*Henri IV* (1589-1610)
		The Edict of Nantes (1598)

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